

# MACMILLAN'S MAGAZINE.

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## RECENT DESIGNS FOR SHIPS OF WAR.

AN opinion may perhaps be entertained in many quarters that professional critics are alone competent to discuss the shipbuilding policy of the navy. A distinction should, however, be drawn between questions of constructive detail and questions of general policy. In regard to the former, experts alone can express a competent opinion: on the general question, common sense is no untrustworthy guide. The perplexity of the subject is increased by the unfortunate circumstance that the opinions of the experts themselves are often diametrically opposed; and, as the controversies that are raised are of the gravest national importance, it becomes necessary for the public to form for themselves an independent conclusion.

I take as an illustration the discussions on the expediency of retaining armour, and the relative power of the gun, the ram, and the torpedo. In the British navy there is an almost hopeless conflict of opinion. Captain Noel, the author of an essay, to which the prize of the United Service Institution was recently awarded by three distinguished admirals, dwells on the importance of avoiding excessive top-weight, and so securing a sufficient margin of stability to enable an ironclad to continue seaworthy, even though partially waterlogged from injuries received in action. He considers this point so important, that

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he recommends the abandonment of armour for the protection of the battery. An opposite view is expressed in an able letter which I have received from an admiral in a high command. The writer is of opinion that our men would have no chance in an unarmoured ship if they had to contend against heavy guns, protected by a turret, and therefore fired with confidence and precision.

The painful uncertainty in which we are placed in this country is, however, shared by every maritime power. Impressed with a conviction of the impracticability of resisting the fire of the heavy guns recently introduced, many naval authorities have advocated the abandonment of armour as a useless and costly encumbrance. In his able work, *La Marine Cuirassée*, published in 1873, M. Dislere, of the Constructor's Department of the French Navy, said, "The armoured sea-going cruiser is in our judgment an obsolete type." The predictions of M. Dislere are almost justified by the course of events in naval construction. The *Inflexible* is protected by 18-inch armour, and the Italian ironclad, the *Dandolo*, by 22-inch armour. When the progress of gunnery shall have rendered 22-inch armour insufficient, Messrs. Cammell undertake to roll plates of 30 or even 40 inches. "For the moment," as it was observed in an article on these vessels in the *Times*,

"the advantage seems to be in favour of armour; and yet a target, representing the strongest portion of the armour of the *Inflexible*, was penetrated at 1,800 metres by a Krupp gun."

While we find an eminent French authority announcing that armour will shortly be laid aside, Admiral Porter, in his report, published in December, 1875, said that the aim of the United States should be, in making changes, to resist the shot from the 12-inch 35-ton gun, which at 200 yards perforates 15 inches of solid wrought iron. He asked for twenty-four first-class ships; but such vessels would represent, in his opinion, no decided power for offence or defence, unless they carried sufficient thickness of armour to resist the average rifled gun, and had speed to get within striking distance of the enemy. "Wooden vessels," he observed, "add nothing to the fighting force, just as, in former days, engagements fought with frigates never materially affected the result of a war."

In his essay, published in the present year, entitled *La Guerre d'Escadre*, M. Dislere somewhat modifies the opinion he had previously expressed. He says, "The aim has been, with the mastless ironclads, to produce a ship-of-war unsinkable by the fire of the enemy, and capable of fighting its guns to the last. Everything has been sacrificed to that idea. Due regard has not been paid to the effect of the new weapons, the terrible effect of which was revealed during the American War of Secession, and at the battle of Lissa. Against the ram, and against the torpedo, the Colossus of the seas, of from ten to eleven thousand tons, loses the advantages so dearly purchased; and the ironclad ship, protected by armour of moderate thickness, resumes those advantages which, under a somewhat inconsiderate impulse of popular opinion, were too little appreciated."

The most competent authorities abroad are unanimous in the opinion that the first-class ironclads of the British navy are triumphs of naval architecture. Among the conspicuous

merits of our latest ships, we may mention their proved capability of keeping the sea in any weather, their abundant coal supply, and the powerful calibre of their artillery. It is not too much to say that, by the originality displayed in their design, and the skilful workmanship with which they have been constructed, the prestige of our country has been sustained, and, indeed, in a very high degree increased. If it were probable that the navy would be required to operate chiefly in ocean warfare, it might be the wiser course to continue to build ships of the *Inflexible* type, in preference to smaller vessels. But there is no immediate prospect of naval operations on the broad ocean. The principal maritime powers are directing their attention chiefly to warfare of another kind—to the attack and defence of forts and harbours; and for coast operations ocean-going ironclads are not adapted. In the United States, no new ironclads have been commenced since the close of the civil war. In his report for 1875, the Secretary of the United States Navy says, "Our circumstances do not require that we should take part in the rivalry between monster cannon and impenetrable armour, since few of our ports are accessible to vessels carrying either, and these may be better defended by attacking the vessel below her armour by sub-aqueous cannon and movable and stationary torpedoes." In Russia attention has of late been directed chiefly to the circular ironclads, the *Popoffkas*, which are intended solely for coast defence. In Germany it has been decided to lay down no more ironclads at present. In France the programme of shipbuilding was settled in 1872, when it was decided that sixteen first-class and twelve second-class ironclads should be built. Financial considerations have prevented the execution of these plans within the period of ten years, originally contemplated, and, while the delay has caused deep regret to many members of the French legislature, with others, that

regret has been tempered by the conviction that, in a period of such rapid transition, it was impossible to spend large sums on shipbuilding, with any confidence that the ships, when built, would represent the latest ideas of naval constructors.

In his essay, *La Marine d'Aujourd'hui*, Admiral de la Gravière asks, but does not answer, the question, What kind of squadron will the admirals of 1882 be called upon to command? He appears so much in doubt as to future transformations of *matériel*, that his attention seems to be mainly directed to the effectual training of the *personnel* of the fleet.

On examining our shipbuilding programme of the present session, one salient feature will be at once noted. With a single exception, that of an armoured torpedo vessel, all the armoured vessels proposed are of large tonnage. The list includes the following ships:—

Agamemnon . . . . .	} each of 8,492 tons.
New Agamemnon . . . . .	
Ajax . . . . .	
Dreadnought . . . . .	10,886 "
Inflexible . . . . .	11,406 "
Nelson . . . . .	} each of 7,323 "
Northampton . . . . .	
Shannon . . . . .	
Téméraire . . . . .	5,103 "
Torpedo Ram . . . . .	8,412 "

It cannot be doubted that all the ships under construction will prove formidable additions to the navy. It is not contended that the construction of first-class vessels of war should be continued; but it is a subject for regret that, whereas, according to the Navy Estimates of the present session, it is proposed to build only 8,000 tons of iron-clad shipping, we have so largely and rapidly increased the dimensions of individual vessels, that the whole shipbuilding of the year is only sufficient to produce a single ship, and that ship liable to instant destruction by weapons of a comparatively inexpensive nature, which can be multiplied therefore in almost overwhelming numbers. Moreover, while the dimensions have been carried to the

furthest possible point, there yet remain some unquestionable defects. The armament of our most recent iron-clads is unsatisfactory. Their guns, although of tremendous calibre, are too few in number. In the excitement of action we cannot rely on perfect accuracy of fire, even were the field of view unobstructed by the smoke, which must inevitably envelope the contending fleets. Of the uncertainty of artillery practice, no more striking proof could be produced than that which was quoted by Captain Price, in the course of the discussion on Captain Scott's lecture, delivered at the Royal United Service Institution, on the maritime defence of England. Captain Price stated that the only practical test as yet applied to our large guns, in respect to accuracy of aim, was made in 1870, when our three largest ships, the *Captain*, the *Monarch*, and the *Hercules* were sent out from Vigo Bay to fire at a rock, distant about 1000 yards. The day was almost absolutely calm. The rock was 600 feet long, and 60 feet high, that is to say twice as long and four times as high as a ship. The *Hercules*, armed with 18-ton guns, fired 17 shots, of which 10 hit. The *Captain*, armed with 25-ton guns, fired 11 shots, and made 4 hits. The *Monarch*, also armed with 25-ton guns, fired 12 shots, and made 9 hits. Captain Price, arguing from these data, agreed in the opinion, previously expressed by Captain Columb, that the *Monarch*, which, in six minutes from the time of opening fire, would have fired 12 shots, could only expect to hit a sister vessel at a distance of 1000 yards, from twice to fifteen times out of every 100 shots. He further remarked that "as the size of our gun increases, so we must expect the accuracy of the gun to decrease."

Captain Scott lays it down that the armament of a first-class fighting ship should not be less than one gun to every thousand tons displacement. The *Inflexible* has only one gun to every 2000 tons displacement, and her armament, being mounted in pairs in

two turrets, and loaded and trained by mechanism, a great portion of which is common to both guns, cannot be reckoned as having the same relative value as four independent guns. If a projectile were to penetrate a turret the pair of guns mounted therein would probably be disabled. Four guns, therefore, mounted in pairs, cannot be reckoned as equivalent to more than three guns mounted and worked independently. It is a weak point in the *Inflexible* class that they have no light armament with which to defend themselves against gunboats and torpedo vessels.

Again, the armour, in the latest designs, covers only a limited area of the sides of the ship; and the unprotected ends, even though filled with cork and coals, and subdivided into numerous cellular compartments, are alleged by Mr. Reed to be fraught with considerable danger to the armoured citadel. I am not competent to take any part in the controversy between Mr. Reed and Mr. Barnaby; but I venture to point to the present discussion as an argument of incontrovertible weight against the policy of building vessels of extreme dimensions and consequently excessive cost. If a new argument were needed, in order to show the desirability of distributing more widely the risks of naval war, and increasing the means of attack—objects which can be best attained by multiplying the number of our fighting ships—it would surely be found in the deplorable controversy which has arisen respecting the *Inflexible*. Having enlarged the dimensions of a single ship to 11,400 tons, and having expended upon its construction a sum which may be estimated at not less than half-a-million sterling, we have the mortification of hearing from a high authority that our enormous and costly ship is not fit to go into action.

There is reason to believe that other features in the most recent designs are not altogether satisfactory. The magazines are outside the citadel, with only a three-inch armoured deck over

them. The weakness of the bow for ramming is a still more serious consideration. "Suppose," as it has been suggested by a distinguished flag-officer, "a ship with unarmoured ends should be obliged to meet another, bow to bow, at full speed (a most likely occurrence); nothing could save her from immediate destruction, provided that her opponent were armoured, and therefore the stronger. If the *Devastation* or the *Dreadnought*, which are armoured round the bows, were to steer straight for the *Inflexible*, they would inevitably have the advantage over her weakly constructed bow. If the *Inflexible* were to endeavour to avoid the blow, she must expose her side to the enemy, which would be still more dangerous."

It is disappointing to be informed of the existence of so many defects in our most ingenious and costly ships; and the British public will probably be disposed to concur in the opinion expressed by Mr. King, of the United States navy, in his description of the *Inflexible*, quoted in the *Engineer* of June 22nd:—"Almost every conceivable precaution," he says, "has been taken to make her secure from the ram and the torpedo. If, however, she should be fairly struck by a solitary powerful fish-torpedo, it is quite possible that she would be crippled, water-logged, or possibly sunk." The question, therefore, presented to us is whether two vessels of smaller dimensions, each carrying two 81-ton guns, instead of four, would not have been a safer, and, in some respects, a better investment.

It was stated at the outset that it was not proposed to criticise the designs of our most recent ships of war, or to advocate any original views on naval architecture; but rather to ascertain the opinions of the most competent professional authorities, and to see how far the latest programme of shipbuilding was wisely framed for the purpose of carrying out their recommendations. The controversy as to the continued use of side armour



must naturally arouse the greatest anxiety in the country. It is said, that unless armour be strong enough to keep out shells, it is worse than useless: and armour, more or less impenetrable, even when limited to vital places, such as the water-line, the engine-room, and the boiler-space, involves a large addition to the cost, and an increase of dimensions, tending to diminish that mobility which is of the last importance.

In considering this subject, it is essential to bear in mind that the increase in the tonnage of our most recent ships has been rendered necessary by the weight of their armour: that armour is a protection against artillery fire alone; and, that while the power of the guns may be indefinitely augmented, there is an inevitable limit to the thickness of armour. The argument against armour was very ably summed up by Sir William Armstrong, in his letter to Lord Dufferin, Chairman of the last Committee on Naval Designs, from which the following extract is taken:—

"The foregoing considerations as to the present effects and probable future of guns, projectiles, and torpedoes, lead me to the conclusion that no practicable thickness of armour can be expected to secure invulnerability for any considerable length of time. At present it is *only the most recent of our armour-clads that have any pretence to be considered invulnerable*. All the earlier vessels, when built, had just as much claim to be so regarded as the strongest ships of the present day; yet they are now completely left behind, and are, in my opinion, much inferior to well-constructed, unarmoured ships. I venture to ask, what reason have we to suppose that the powers of attack will not continue quickly to overtake the increased powers of resistance, which we are applying at great increase of cost, and at great sacrifice of general efficiency? Every addition to the weight carried for defence must be attended with a diminution of armament and of speed, unless the size of the ship be increased in a very rapid proportion. A continual addition, therefore, to the thickness of the armour involves either a continual reduction of offensive power, or such an increase in the size of the vessel and its consequent cost as must limit the production of sea-going ships of war to a number inadequate for constituting an efficient navy."

It may be thought that Sir William

Armstrong, as an artilleryman, would naturally be impressed with the irresistible power of guns against armour; but when we turn to the official declarations of the constructors themselves, we find them substantially in accord with the view expressed in the foregoing extract. The papers relating to the design of the *Inflexible*, recently presented to Parliament, contain a well-balanced summary of the arguments for and against the continued use of armour:—

"We do not see that any increase in the penetrating power of guns can make it desirable to dispense with hull armour, merely because it is penetrable to some guns within certain ranges. It will always remain impenetrable to all guns beyond certain ranges, and to many guns at all ranges, and must therefore be advantageous as a means of security to the vital parts of the ship.

"The limit to its thickness is to be found, we think, in the size and cost of the ship.

"So far as we have gone at present, fourteen inches of armour have been found to be consistent with high-speed, perfect-turning power, and moderate draught of water. No one of these conditions imposes a limit; but a single ship costs nearly half a million sterling, and it is exposed to many risks.

"The losses and casualties of a naval engagement would do much, there is no doubt, to bring out the imminence of these risks, would perhaps show that the large and costly ship is even more exposed to them than the smaller one.

"It may be that the limit of size and cost has been reached in the *Fury*, and that, with her bulk and cost, the maximum of advantages may be obtained.

"We are ourselves disposed to think that this is so, and that there may be retrogression in this respect as more experience is gained with the powers of the torpedo, the ram, and other submarine instruments of attack."

Let us now refer to another official statement, emanating from the Council of Construction at Whitehall. On the 6th of April of last year, Mr. Barnaby read a paper at the Institute of Naval Architects, in which the relative merits of very large ships, as compared with vessels of more moderate dimensions, were ably discussed. "The attack," he said, "of several fast unarmoured rams and torpedo-boats upon a somewhat slower armoured ship, although involving the

probable destruction of some of the attacking vessels, would still expose the armoured ship to a risk which she ought never to encounter alone. The assailants ought to be brought to bay, before they could get within striking distance of the ironclad, by consorts, armed, like the attacking vessels, with the ram and the torpedo, which may take, like them, the chances of being sunk. In other words, I contend that the defence against the ram and the torpedo must be sought for, not in the construction of the ship alone or mainly, but also and chiefly in the proper grouping of the forces at the points of attack. Each costly ironclad ought to be a division defended against the torpedo and the ram by smaller numerous but less important parts of the general forces. If the foregoing considerations are correct, there is still place in naval warfare for costly ironclads with thick armour and powerful guns. There is place also for association with them of unarmoured vessels armed with the torpedo and manned by brave men."

There was present among Mr. Barnaby's audience the ex-Controller of the Navy, Sir Spencer Robinson. In the course of the discussion on the paper just quoted, he gave his full approval to the proposal to provide a supplementary flotilla as necessary auxiliaries to a fleet of ironclads. "No suggestion," he said, "more valuable for the purposes of war has been made by any person within my knowledge than the able suggestion of Mr. Barnaby, that the true mode of defending our heavy ironclads from these attacks is by the counter-attack of torpedoes and rams. No fleet, therefore, can be considered a fleet, and, in my humble opinion, no ship like the *Inflexible* can be considered a ship of war, unless provided with attendant rams and torpedoes to meet those attacks to which she is sure to be subjected. I am quite satisfied also that Mr. Barnaby has hit upon the right plan of defending such ships from the attacks of torpedoes. It is

by counter-attack that you must succeed, and not by piling mountains of iron upon the sides of your ships."

Though not a naval architect, Sir Samuel Baker has won a high reputation among his countrymen for distinguished success in another field of effort. Having directed his attention as an outsider to the subject of the present paper, he arrived at a conclusion almost identical with that expressed by Mr. Barnaby. Sir Samuel Baker's views were set forth in a letter to Mr. E. J. Reed, and were rightly deemed so sound a contribution to the discussion, that they were published as a note to Mr. Reed's speech, in the transactions of the Institute of Naval Architects. They were to the following effect:—

"Accepting, as a matter of course, that the comparatively short handy ironclad must be the fighting giant of the present and future, instead of the long ships of the *Minotaur* class, it appears to me that every ironclad should possess two tenders that would absolutely be inseparable attendants. These tenders should be wooden vessels, with an immense speed, fitted as rams—tonnage about 2,500.

"Each accepted ironclad of the navy would thus be accompanied by two fast handy rams, which would never leave her, but would belong to her as entirely as the horses do to the field-gun.

"These rams would, in action, wait upon the ironclads. Each ram-tender would be provided with two torpedo steam-launches—thus in smooth weather a single ironclad (carrying herself two torpedo launches), would exhibit force as follows:—

- 1 Ironclad,
- 2 Rams,
- 6 Torpedo launches."

The advice of officers who have been engaged on active service will naturally be received with special deference. At the close of the civil war, the Secretary of the United States Navy invited each of the flag-officers of the fleet to prepare a report on the types of ships, which they considered it desirable to introduce into the American service. Several very interesting and valuable statements were submitted, among which I would more particularly refer to a paper by Admiral Goldsborough, which shows

a degree of wisdom and forethought far in advance of the time when it was produced. Writing in 1861, he says:—

"A marked pause must occur in the progress of ordnance before a fixed or definite conclusion can be reached as to the relative immunity obtainable by iron plates. Absolute immunity is out of the question.

"That progress has already produced the effect of restricting their application, in the case of sea-going vessels, to the more vitally exposed parts; and it is quite possible that it may finally establish the conviction that such plating for such vessels is really of no marked consequence.

"In the meantime the tendency of its effects must be to impress the value of rams.

"The protection of harbours nowadays does not lie in forts; it lies essentially in powerful steam-rams, aided, when necessary, by obstructions in passage-ways.

"Rams, intended purely for harbour defence, would be better without than with guns. They themselves are to be the projectiles, and the steam the powder.

"To fit the rams for guns would be to swell the item of cost largely, and thus abridge their multiplication.

"The essential points to be secured in these rams, each to a degree as consistently with all the rest as practicable, are great strength throughout every part of the hull, not overlooking the bottom by any manner of means; every protection that supportable plating can afford, a high velocity, an ample security of machinery, the utmost rapidity in turning, and a suitable bow."

The next great action, after the close of the civil war in America, was fought at Lissa. What did the officers in command give as the result of their tragical experiences on that occasion? Their views were quoted by Captain Scott in his lecture (to which reference has already been made) delivered last year at the Royal United Service Institution. "The ram," he said, "has been aptly termed the 'naval bayonet,' and is a weapon which, if handled with skill and pluck, will prove invincible. Its special fitness for British sailors was referred to in my last lecture, and the Chief of the Naval Constructive Department of the nation which used it with such effect off Lissa says of this weapon—when speaking of the reconstruction of three vessels of the Austrian Navy at the cost of one iron-clad—'That we, as the result of this

cheap conversion, now possess three rams, the most dangerous and secure weapons, I consider, and compared with which, the action and effect of the aggressive torpedo is, in my opinion, doubtful and insecure, and may easily endanger the ships of its own fleet.'"

Admiral Persano's memorandum on the battle of Lissa, also quoted by Captain Scott, would seem to imply that the experiences of the engagement had made the same impression on the vanquished as upon the victors. "As encounters between iron-clads will," he said, "be decided rather by the ram than by the fire of artillery, that fleet would undoubtedly win the battle which had the greatest number of ships fitted with double screws."

Turning to the French Navy, we find that Admiral Jurien de la Gravière predicts that "ships will fight in the future with the rams alone. The captains will not dare to open fire, lest their view of the enemy should be obscured by the smoke from their own guns. When the two fleets have passed through one another, they will turn and renew the attack. In the execution of this manœuvre the slowest ships will expose their broadsides to the enemy, and will inevitably be destroyed by the ram." Armour is valuable only as a protection against the fire of artillery; and the ram and the torpedo are now regarded by the highest naval authorities abroad as their most formidable weapons.

M. Dislere, in his latest publication, expresses an opinion that the difficulties in the use of the torpedo in action are not as yet surmounted. "But this fact," he says, "only lends the greater importance to the ram, and renders it the more necessary to reduce as much as possible the dimensions and the displacements of our fighting ships."

While the efficiency of the ram was signally manifested in the action off Lissa, the destructive powers of the torpedo have been exhibited on a very recent occasion in the terrible destruction of a Turkish monitor on

the Danube. In the United States great attention has been given to torpedo warfare. All the ships of the American Navy are provided with the spar torpedo, and efforts are continually being directed to the production of an efficient automatic sub-aqueous torpedo. The chances of attack by means of unarmoured steam launches have also been considered; and on this subject the views of the majority of naval officers are contained in an article in the *United States Army and Navy Journal* of June 2nd, from which the following is an extract:—

"The steam launch is by no means so terrible an invention as is supposed. A single discharge of grape from a ship, attacked by the Thomeycroft launch, will destroy and almost instantly sink this supposed irresistible ironclad destroyer.

"Vessels intended to carry torpedoes to be exploded against ships armed with guns are practically worthless, unless capable of resisting shot.

"But, against an assailant possessing a torpedo boat with a flush impregnable deck and movable submerged torpedo, as described in our last issue, neither grape nor rifle shot will avail; the vessel attacked, whether a little monitor or a first-class ironclad ship, will certainly be destroyed, unless the position and other circumstances admit of rapid retreat."

In the Navy estimates for the current year provision is made for commencing the construction of a vessel of the type recommended in the American journal. It cannot be doubted that such vessels would prove extremely formidable in action.

The recent encounter between H.M.S. *Shah* and *Amethyst* and the Peruvian ironclad ship *Huascar* is full of interest, in relation to the question of retaining armour for the protection of ships of war. The results of the combat are obviously in favour of the retention of armour. Though the *Huascar* was struck 100 times, only one 9-inch shot penetrated three inches into the turret, and that without doing any material damage. The engagement was fought at distances varying from 200 to 3,000 yards, and lasted three hours. As the plates of the *Huascar* were only 4½

inches in thickness, the armour would easily have been penetrated by the *Shah's* 9-inch and 7-inch guns, provided that the shot had struck at right angles. The experiences of the action show how rarely this is likely to occur in practice, and how immensely the power of destruction is reduced when the armour is struck obliquely.

The lessons to be learned from the engagement between the *Shah* and *Huascar* will doubtless be appreciated by the constructors at Whitehall. They will probably adopt in the future the system of inclined armour, so ably advocated by the editors of the *Engineer*. In an article which appeared in that paper on the 14th April, 1876, it was shown that, if the armour were inclined upwards at an angle of 45 degrees, a thickness of 12 inches would be sufficient to resist even the 81-ton gun, whereas, with armour on the vertical system, twice the thickness would be required. It was further shown that by the reduction in the breadth of the armoured deck over the central citadel, the top-weight would be considerably reduced, and that the armour protection on the sides of the ship might be proportionately extended. By the adoption of inclined armour a larger reserve of stability may be secured, and so the objections which have been raised by Mr. Reed to the *Inflexible* may be removed in future designs.

In conclusion, a few suggestions may be offered as to the shipbuilding policy most suitable for a period of rapid transition in the modes of naval war and naval architecture. It is not necessary to spend a larger sum than at present, nor is it proposed that the construction of ships of the best type for ocean warfare should be discontinued. It must be admitted by every English statesman that, so long as we retain our colonial empire, we must maintain a fleet, on which we can rely to guard our communications across the seas. It does not follow that any ships destined for this service need exceed a displacement of 8000 tons,

which is less by one-third than the tonnage of the *Inflexible*. With a view to a reduction of dimensions, it would probably be the wiser course to aim at making our ships unsinkable rather than impenetrable, to increase the strength of the structure below the water, and to diminish the armoured protection of the guns. If the guns should be disabled, the ram could still be relied upon, provided the vitals of the ship remained intact. The most recent experiences with the ram and the torpedo point distinctly to the importance of numbers, to the unwisdom of placing too many eggs in one basket, and to the expediency of distributing the inevitable risks of naval warfare, by sending forth fleets, not only strong in the power of the individual ships of which they are composed, but strong in regard to numbers. To this view Mr. Reed himself has given his sanction in a recent debate in Parliament, when he said that the increased efficiency of the torpedo made smaller vessels desirable. It is most unwise to spend all the money devoted to the construction of vessels for the line of battle in building ships of the *Inflexible* or *Agamemnon* type. Let us appropriate one-third or one-half from the vote for armoured ships to vessels, let us say, not exceeding from 2,000 to 3,000 tons. With these restricted dimensions we cannot have all the qualities which it has been attempted to combine in the *Inflexible*, but we can have vessels formidable either with the gun, the ram, or the torpedo; and, in proportion as we add to the number of our ships by reducing the dimensions of individual vessels, so the loss to a fleet of any single ship, disabled or destroyed in action, will be less disastrous.

The administration of the navy must never be degraded into a party or personal question. We are all united in one common object—that of creating and maintaining a powerful navy. The supplies necessary for such a purpose will always be cheerfully granted. The question we have to

consider is whether the money voted for the navy is effectively applied to the great national object in view.

The development of the means of defence has not kept, and cannot keep, pace with the increasing power of offensive naval weapons. Should it not therefore be the policy of our naval administration to expend a larger proportion of the ample resources at their disposal in so multiplying their means of attack, that no hostile fleet will venture to expose itself to inevitable destruction by engaging a British squadron?

At the present moment the controversy as to the stability of the *Inflexible* has aroused a painful feeling of anxiety. The Government have been well advised in appointing a committee of inquiry, composed of men eminent for their scientific attainments, and holding independent professional positions. Neither Parliament nor the country would have been satisfied with an expression of confidence, emanating from Whitehall, and unsupported by other professional testimony. The controversy which has been raised is unprecedented in its character. A difference of opinion has been expressed between two authorities of exactly equal rank. The one has been, and other is, the Chief Constructor of the Navy. They differ on a question of fact, which can only be exhaustively investigated and decided by men of competent scientific attainments. It was merely throwing dust in the eyes of members of Parliament unskilled in the science of naval architecture to invite them to inspect a model, which might or might not be an exact model, and to observe the behaviour of that model in a trough, under conditions, which might or might not represent the conditions to which the ship would be exposed in action, or in navigating the seas.

An objection may be entertained in some quarters to the appointment of a committee or a commission, to consider the designs of our ships of war. It



may be thought that the Admiralty are thereby relieved of that responsibility, which ought not to be shared with any other co-ordinate authority. It must, however, be acknowledged that at the present time the shipbuilding problem presents difficulties quite unparalleled in the previous history of the navy. I gladly acknowledge that the present Naval Lords, if they were not in office, would constitute a most able commission. But my fear is that, at the present moment, they have no leisure to investigate new problems of armament, tactics, and construction. Mr. Samuda, in seconding a motion introduced in the House of Commons by Mr. Seeley in 1868 said—as I think, truly—that when a great policy had been inaugurated, he could well understand that a department of the State might efficiently carry it out; but it was unlikely that such a policy could be initiated by a Government department. The State, by appointing a commission of inquiry, would obtain the assistance of men of the greatest ability, experience, and knowledge in the kingdom, who would freely give evidence. Similar views were expressed, though with becoming official reserve, in the same debate by Mr. Childers. He wished for some plan which, without diminishing the responsibility of the constructive department of the Admiralty, would give it the advantage of a certain amount of scientific investigation and advice.

Investigations such as that proposed in the case of the *Inflexible* can scarcely fail to do good. The public is supplied with the latest information on the condition of the *matériel* of the navy, and the Admiralty may receive novel and valuable hints for the improvement of the fleet.

THOMAS BRASSEY.

*N.B.*—The first intelligence of the engagement between the *Shah*, the *Amethyst*, and the *Huascar*, had not

reached this country when the foregoing pages were written. Even now official information is wanting. What we already know, however, is sufficient to prove that evolutionary qualities are of the highest importance, that deep draught is a serious disadvantage, and that a mixed armament, including an adequate proportion of armour-piercing guns, is necessary to constitute an efficient vessel of war. It has been said that an encounter between an unarmoured and an armoured vessel is so unequal that an officer in command of an unarmoured ship would always be justified in declining an engagement; but, while the British navy continues to be animated by its ancient spirit, a commander will never decline an action so long as his vessel remains afloat. When we take into view the expenditure on the unarmoured *Shah*, and the circumstance that she was manned by a crew of 600 men, it is unsatisfactory in the highest degree to know how unequal was the battle between the British flagship and the Peruvian iron-clad. If we give up armour, let us at least secure a compensation in superiority of numbers. It may not be worth while for the protection of commerce to construct ships so costly as the smallest armoured cruiser must needs be; but, if we do abandon armour, let us be content with a vessel of moderate tonnage, of the *Alabama* type. By so doing, we shall construct three or four unarmoured vessels for the price of one *Shah*, and, by combining squadrons of small vessels in battle against one larger antagonist, we can compensate for inferiority of armour and guns by superiority in that formidable weapon, the ram. If, instead of one *Shah*, Admiral de Horsey had had three or four rams under his command, he would probably have sunk or captured the *Huascar*.

T. B.

## YOUNG MUSGRAVE.

## PART VIII.

## CHAPTER XXII.

## AT HOME.

It was still early, and Stanton, so easygoing and leisurely a house, was not yet astir when Geoff got home. Hours of sunshine and morning light are over even in August before seven o'clock, which was the earliest hour at which Lady Stanton's servants, who were all "so kind" to her, began to stir. They kept earlier hours at Penninghame, where Geoff managed to get a dog-cart, with an inquisitive driver, who recognised, and would fain have discovered what brought him from home at that hour. The young man, however, first took leave of his little companion, whom he deposited safely at the door of the old hall, which was already open, and where they parted with mutual vows of reliance and faith in each other. These vows, however, were not exchanged by the hall-gate, but in a shady corner of the chase, where the two young creatures paused for a moment.

"You will trust me that I will do everything for him, as if he had been my own father?" said Geoff, eagerly.

Lilias was less easily contented, as was natural, and replied with some hesitation:

"I would rather it was me; I would rather find out everything, and bring him home," she said.

"But Lily, what could you do? while you see I know a great deal already," Geoff said. It was a bargain not altogether satisfactory to the little woman, who was thus condemned, as so many grown women have been, to wait indefinitely for the action of another, in a matter so deeply interesting to herself.

Lilias looked at him wistfully, with

an anxious curve over her eyebrows, and a quiver in her mouth. The tension of suspense had begun for her, which is one of the hardest burdens of a woman. Oh, if she could but have gone herself, not waiting for any one, to the old woman on the hill! It was true the mountains were very lonely, and the relief of meeting Geoff had been intense; and though she had not gone half way, or nearly so much, her limbs were aching with the unusual distance; but yet to be tired, and lonely, and frightened is nothing, as Lilias felt, to this waiting, which might never come to an end. And already the ease and comfort and sudden relief with which she had leant upon Geoff's understanding and sympathy had evaporated a little, leaving behind only the strange story about her father, the sudden discovery of trouble and sorrow which had startled her almost into womanhood out of childhood. She looked up into Geoff's face very wistfully—very eagerly; her eyes dilated, and gleaming with that curve over them which once indented in young brows so seldom altogether disappears again.

"Oh, Mr. Geoff!" she said, "but papa—is not your papa: and you will perhaps have other things to do: or—perhaps—you will forget. But me, I shall be always thinking. I will never forget," said the little girl.

"And neither will I forget, my little Lily!" he cried. He too was nervous and tremulous with excitement and fatigue. He stooped towards her, holding her hands. "Give me a kiss, Lily, and I will never forget."

The day before she would not have thought much of that infantile salutation—and she put up her soft cheek readily enough, with the child's simple habit; but when the two faces touched, a flood of colour came over both,

scorching Lillas, as it seemed, with a sense of shame which bewildered her, which she did not understand. She drew back hastily, with a sudden cry. Sympathy, or some other feeling still more subtle and incomprehensible, made Geoff's young countenance flame too. He looked at her with a tenderness that brought the tears to his eyes.

"You are only a child," he said, hastily, apologetically; "and I suppose I am not much more, as people say," he added, with a little broken laugh. Then, after a pause—"But Lily, we will never forget that we have met this morning; and what one of us does will be for both of us; and you will always think of me as I shall always think of you. Is it a bargain, Lily?"

"Always!" said the little girl, very solemnly; and she gave him her hand again which she had drawn away, and her other cheek; and this time the kiss got accomplished solemnly, as if it had been a religious ceremony on both sides—which indeed, perhaps, in one way or another it was.

When Geoff felt himself carried rapidly after this, behind a fresh country horse, with the inquisitive ruddy countenance of Robert Gill from the "Penninghame Arms" by his side, along the margin of Penninghame Water towards his home, there was a thrill and tremor in him which he could not quite account for. By the time he had got half way home, however, he had begun to believe that the tremor meant nothing more than a nervous uncertainty as to how he should get into Stanton, and in what state of abject terror he might find his mother. Even to his own unsophisticated mind, the idea of being out all night had an alarming and disreputable sound; and probably Lady Stanton had been devoured by all manner of terrors. The perfectly calm aspect of the house, however, comforted Geoff; no one seemed stirring, except in the lower regions of the house, where the humblest of its

inhabitants—the servants' servants—were preparing for their superiors.

Geoff dismissed his dog-cart outside the gates, leaving upon the mind of Robert Gill a very strong certainty that the young lord was "a wild one, like them that went before him," and had been upon "no good gait."

"Felks don't stay out all night, and creep into th' house through a side door, as quiet as pussy, for good," said the rural sage, with perfect reasonableness.

As for Geoff, he stole up through the shrubberies to reconnoitre the house and see where he could most easily make an entrance, with a half-comic sense of vagabondism; a man who behaved so ought to be guilty. But he was greatly surprised to see the library window through which he had come out on the previous night wide open; and yet more surprised to hear, at the sound of his own cautious footstep on the gravel, a still more cautious movement within, and to descry the kindly countenance of Mr. Tritton, his tutor, with a red nose and red eyes as from want of sleep, looking out with great precaution.

Mr. Tritton's anxious countenance lighted up at sight of him. He came to the window very softly, but with great eagerness, to admit Geoff, and threw himself upon his pupil. "Where have you been—where have you been? But thank God you have come back," he cried, in a voice which was broken by agitation.

Geoff could not but laugh, serious as he had been before. Good Mr. Tritton had a dressing-gown thrown over his evening toilet of the previous night; his white tie was all rumpled and disreputable. He had caught a cold, poor good man, with the open window, and sneezed even as he received his prodigal; his nose was red, and so were his eyes, which watered half with cold, half with emotion.

"Oh, my dear Geoff," he cried, with a shiver: "what is the cause of this? I have spent a most unhappy night. What can be the cause of it? But

thank God you have come back ; and if I can keep it from the knowledge of her ladyship, I will." Then, though he was so tired and so serious, Geoff could not but laugh.

"Have you been sitting up for me ? How good of you ! and what a cold you have got !" he said, struggling between mirth and gratitude. "Have you kept it from my mother ? But I have been doing no harm, master. You need not look at me so anxiously. I have been walking almost all the night, and doing no harm."

"My dear Geoff ! I have been very uneasy, of course. You never did anything of the kind before. Walking all night ! you must be dead tired ; but that is secondary, quite secondary : if you can really assure me, on your honour——" said the anxious tutor, looking at him, with his little white whiskers framing his little red face, more like a good little old woman than ever, and with a look of the most anxious scrutiny in his watery eyes. Mr. Tritton was very virtuous and very particular in his own bachelorly person, and there had crept upon him besides something of the feminine fervour of anxiety about his charge, which was in the air of this feminine and motherly house.

"On my honour !" said Geoff, meeting his gaze with laughing eyes.

And a pang of relief filled Mr. Tritton's mind. He was almost overcome by it, and could have cried but for his dignity—and, indeed, did cry for his cold. He said, faltering, "Thank Heaven, Geoff ! I have been very anxious, my dear boy. Your mother does not know anything about it. I found the window open, and then I found your room vacant. I thought you might have—stepped out—perhaps gone to smoke a cigar. A cigar in the fresh air after dinner is perhaps the least objectionable form of the indulgence, as you have often heard me say. So I waited, especially as I had something to say to you. Then, as I found you did not come in, I became anxious—yes, very anxious as the night went

on. You never did anything of the kind before ; and when the morning came and woke me—for I suppose I must have dozed, though I was too miserable to sleep, in a draught——"

"Yes, I see, you have caught cold. Go to bed now, master, and so shall I," said Geoff. "I am dead tired. What a sneeze ! and all on my account ; and you have such bad colds."

"Yes," said Mr. Tritton, blowing his nose vehemently, "I have very bad colds. They last so long. I have sneezed so I really did fear the house would be roused, but servants fortunately sleep through anything. Geoff ! I don't want to force confidence, but it really would be right that you should confide in me : otherwise how can I be sure that her ladyship—ought not," said the good man with a fresh sneeze, "to know—?"

"You ought to be in bed, and so ought I," said Geoff. "I will tell my mother, don't fear ; but perhaps it will be as well not to say anything more just at present. Master, you must really go this moment and take care of yourself. Come, and I will see you to your room——"

"Ah ! it is my part to look after you, Geoff," said good Mr. Tritton. "It might be supposed—her ladyship might think—that I had neglected——"

"Come along," said Geoff, arbitrarily, "to bed." And how glad he was to stretch out his own young limbs, and forget everything in the profound sleep of his age : Mr. Tritton had very much the worst of it. He did nothing but sneeze for the next two hours, waking himself up every time he went to sleep ; and his head ached, and his eyes watered, and the good man felt thoroughly wretched.

"Oh, there is that poor Mr. Tritton with one of his bad colds again," Lady Stanton said, who was disturbed by the sound, and, though she was a good woman, the pity in her face was not unmingled by other sentiments. "We shall have nothing but sneezing for the next month," she said to herself in an undertone. And doubtless still less

favourable judgments were pronounced down stairs. A glass was found on the table of the library in which Mr. Tritton, good man, had taken some camphor by way of staving off his cold while he sat and watched. Benson the butler, perversely and unkindly (for who could mistake the smell of camphor!) declared that "old Tritton had been making a night of it. He don't surprise me with his bad colds," said that functionary; "look at the colour of his nose!" And indeed it could not be denied that this was red, as the nose of a man subject to fits of sneezing is apt to be.

When Geoff woke in the broad sunshine, and found that it was nearly noon, his first feeling of consternation was soon lost in the strange realization of all that had happened since his last waking, which suddenly came upon his mind like something new, and more real than before. The perspective even of a few hours' sleep makes any new fact or discovery more distinct. So many emotions had followed each other through his mind, that such an interval was necessary to make him feel the real importance of all that he had heard and seen. 'Lizabeth Bampfylde had said what there was to say in few words, but the facts alone were sufficient to tell the strange story. The chief difficulty was that Geoff had never heard of the elder son, whom the vagrant called his gentleman brother, and to whom the family and more than the family seemed to have been sacrificed. He did not remember any mention of the Bampfylde except of the mother and daughter who had helped John Musgrave to escape, and one of whom had disappeared with him, and the mystery which surrounded this other individual, who seemed really the chief actor in the tragedy, had yet to be made out. His mind was full of this as he dressed hastily, with sundry interruptions. The household had not quite made out the events of the past night, but that there had been something "out of the common" was evident to the meanest capacity. The library

window had been open all night, which was the fault of Mr. Tritton who had undertaken to close it, begging Benson to go to bed, and not to mind. Mr. Tritton himself had been seen by an early scullion in his white tie, very much ruffled, at six o'clock; and the volleys of sneezing which had disturbed the house at seven, had been distinctly heard moving about like musketry on a march, now at one point, now another of the corridor and stairs. To crown all these strange commotions, was the fact that the young master of the house, instead of obeying Benson's call at half-past seven, did not budge (and then with reluctance) till eleven o'clock. If all these occurrences meant nothing, why then Mr. Benson pronounced himself a Dutchman, and the wonder breathed upwards from the kitchen and housekeeper's room to my lady's chamber, where her maid did all a maid could do (and that is not little, as most heads of a family know) to awaken suspicion. It was suggested to her ladyship that it was very strange that Mr. Tritton should have been walking about the house at seven in the morning, waking up my lady with his sneezings—and it was a mercy there had not been a robbery with the library window "open to the ground," left open all night; and then for my lord to be in bed at eleven was a thing that had never happened before since his lordship had the measles. "I hope he is not sickening for one of these fevers," Lady Stanton's attendant said.

This made Geoff's mother start, and give a suppressed scream of apprehension, and inquire anxiously whether there was any fever about. She had already in her cool drawing-room, over her needlework, felt a vague uneasiness. Geoff had never, since those days of the measles, missed breakfast and prayers before; he had sent her word that he had overslept himself, that he had been sitting up late on the previous night—but altogether it was odd. Lady Stanton, however, subdued her panic, and sat still and dismissed her maid,



waiting with many tremors in her soul till Geoff should come to account for himself. He had been the best boy in the world, and had never given her any anxiety; but all Lady Stanton's neighbours had predicted the coming of a time when Geoff would "break out," and when the goodness of his earlier days would but increase the riot of the inevitable sowing of wild oats. Lady Stanton had smiled at this, but with a smouldering sense of insecurity in her heart; alarmed, though she knew there was no cause. Mothers are an order of beings peculiarly constituted, full of certainties and doubts, which moment by moment give each other the lie. Ah, no, Geoff would not "break out," would not "go wrong," it was not in him. He was too true, too honourable, too pure—did not she know every thought in his mind, and feeling in his heart? But oh, the anguish if Geoff should not be so true and so pure—if he should be weak, be tempted and fall, and stain the whiteness which his mother so deeply trusted in, yet so trembled for! Who can understand such paradoxes? She would have believed no harm of her boy—and yet in her horror of harm for him the very name of evil gave her a panic. Nothing wonderful in that. She sat and trembled to the very tyings of her shoe, and yet was sure, certain, ready to answer to the whole world for her son, who had done no evil. Other women who have sons know what Lady Stanton felt. She sat nervously still, listening to every sound, till he should come and explain himself. Why was he so late? What had happened last night to make the house uneasy? Lady Stanton would not allow herself to think that she was alarmed. It was true that pulses beat in her ears, and her heart mounted to her throat, but she sat as still as a statue, and went on with her knitting. One may not be able to help being foolish, but one can always help showing it, she said to herself.

The sight of Geoff when he appeared, fresh and blooming, made all the

throbbings subside at once. She even made a fine effort to laugh. "What does this mean, Geoff? I never knew you so late. The servants have been trying to frighten me, and I hear Mr. Tritton has got a very bad cold," she said, getting the words out hurriedly, afraid lest she might break down or betray herself. She eyed him very curiously over her knitting, but she made believe not to be looking at him at all.

"Yes; poor old Tritton," he said; "it is my fault; he sat up for me. I went out——" he made a little pause; for Geoff reflected that other people's secrets were not his to confide, even to his mother—"with Wild Bampfylde, who came, I suppose, out of gratitude for what little I did for him."

"You went out—with that poacher fellow, Geoff?"

"Yes:" he nodded, meeting her horrified eyes quite calmly and with a smile; "why not, mother? You did not think I should be afraid of him, I hope?"

"Oh, how very imprudent, Geoff! You, whose life is of so much value!—who are so very important to me and everybody!"

"Most fellows are important who have mothers to make a fuss," he said, smiling. "I don't think there is much more in me than the rest. But he has not harmed me much, you can see. I have all my limbs as usual; I am none the worse."

"Thank God for that!" said Lady Stanton; "but you must not do the like again. Indeed, indeed, Geoff, you are too bold; you must not put yourself in the way of trouble. Think of your poor brother. Oh, my dear, what an example! You must not be so rash again."

"I will not be rash—in that way," he said. "But, mother, I want you to tell me something. You remember all about it: did you ever know of any more Bampfyldes? There was the mother, and this fellow. Did you ever know of any other?"

"You are missing out the chief one, Geoff—Lily, the girl."

"Yes, yes; I know about her. I did not mean the girl. But think! Were those three all? Were there more—another—?"

Lady Stanton shook her head. "I do not remember any other. I think three were quite enough. There is mischief in one, even, of that kind."

"What do you mean by that kind? You did not know them. I hope my mother is not one of the kind who, not knowing people, are unjust to them."

"Geoff!" Lady Stanton was bewildered by this grand tone. She looked up at him with sudden curiosity, and this curiosity was mixed inevitably with some anxiety too; for, when your son betrays an unjustifiable partisanship, what so natural as to feel that he must have "some motive?" "Of course I did not mean to be unjust. But I do not pretend to remember everything that came out on the trial. It was the mother and daughter that interested me. You should ask your cousin Mary; she recollects better than I do. But have you heard anything about another? What did the poacher say? Had you a great deal of conversation with him? And don't you think it was rash to put yourself in the power of such a lawless sort of fellow? Thank God! you are safe and sound."

"What do you mean about putting myself in his power? Do you think I am not a match for him? He is not such a giant, mother. Yes, I am quite safe and sound. And we had a great deal of talk. I never met with anybody so interesting. He talked about everything; chiefly about 'the creatures,' as he calls them."

"What creatures?" said Lady Stanton, wondering and alarmed. There were "creatures" in the world, this innocent lady knew, about whom a vagabond was very likely to talk, but who could not be mentioned between her and her boy.

"The wild things in the woods,

birds and mice, and such small deer, and all their ways, and what they mean, and how to make acquaintance with them. I don't suppose he knows very much out of books," said young Geoff; "but the bit of dark moor grew quite different with that wild fellow in it—like the hill in the *Lady of the Lake*, when all Clan Alpine got up from behind the rocks and the bushes. Don't you remember, mother? One could hear 'the creatures' rustling and moving, and multitudes of living things one never gave a thought to. It felt like poetry, too, though I don't know any poem like it. It was very strange and interesting. That pleases me more than your clever people," said Geoff.

"Oh, my dear, I beg your pardon," said Lady Stanton, suddenly getting up and kissing her boy's cheek as she passed him. She went away to hide the penitence in her eyes. As for Geoff, he took this very easily and simply. He thought it was natural she should apologize to Bampfylde for not thinking well of him. He had not a notion of the shame of evil-thinking thus brought home to her, which scorched Lady Stanton's cheeks.

#### CHAPTER XXIII.

##### COUSIN MARY'S OPINION.

GEOFF spent the remainder of this day at home, looking once more over the file of old newspapers in which the Musgrave case was printed at such length, the *Times* and the local papers, with all their little diversities of evidence, one supplementing another; but he could not make out any reference at all distinct to a third person in the story. The two suitors of the village beauty, one of whom she preferred in feeling, though the second of them had evidently made her waver in her allegiance by the attractions of his superior rank and wealth, were enough to fill up the canvas. They were so naturally and appropriately pitted against each other, that neither the curiosity of the period nor the art

of the story-teller required any additional actor in the little tragedy. What more natural than that these two rivals should meet—should go from angry words to blows—and that, in the frenzy of the moment, one should give to the other the fatal but unpremeditated stroke which made an end of his rivalry and his life? The public imagination is simple, and loves a simple story, and this was so well-constructed and well-balanced—perfect in all its parts. What more likely than that the humble coquette should hesitate and almost swerve from her faith to her accepted lover when the young lord, so much more splendid than the young squire, came on the scene? or that, when her wavering produced such fatal consequences, the poor girl, not being wicked, but only foolish, should have devoted herself with heroism to the man whom she had been the means of drawing into deadly peril? Geoff, with his eyes enlightened, could dimly perceive the traces of another person unaccounted for, who had appeared casually in the course of the drama. Indeed, the counsel for the prosecution had expressed his regret that he could not call this person as a witness, as he was supposed to have emigrated, and no trace could be found of him. His name, however, was not mentioned, though the counsel for the defence, evidently in complete ignorance, had taunted his learned brother with the non-appearance of this mysterious stranger, and defied him to prove, by the production of him, that there had ever been feelings of bitter animosity between Musgrave and Lord Stanton. "The jury would like to know more about this anonymous gentleman," the coroner had said. But no evidence had ever been produced. Geoff searched through the whole case carefully, making various notes, and feeling that he himself, anxious as he had been, had never before noticed, except in the most incidental way, these slight, mysterious references. Even now he was misty about it. He was so tired,

indeed, that his mind was less clear than usual; and when good Mr. Tritton appeared in the afternoon, very red with perpetual sneezing, his eyes running as with tears, he found Geoff in the library, in a great chair, with all the papers strewed about, sleeping profoundly, the old yellow *Times* in his hand, and the *Dalesman's Gazette* at his feet. The young man jumped up when Mr. Tritton laid his hand on his shoulder, with quite unnecessary energy, almost knocking down his respected instructor. "Take care, take care, Geoff!" he cried; "I am not going to hurt you, my boy!" a speech which amused Geoff greatly, who could have picked Mr. Tritton up and thrown him across his shoulder. This interruption of his studies stopped them for the time; but next morning—not without causing his mother some anxiety—he proposed to ride over once more to Elfdale, to consult Cousin Mary.

"It is but two days since we left, my dear," Lady Stanton said, with a sigh, thinking of all she had heard on the subject of "elderly sirens;" but Geoff showed her so clearly how it was that he must refer his difficulties to the person most qualified to solve them, that his mother yielded; though she too began to ask herself why her son should be so much concerned about John Musgrave. What was John Musgrave to Geoff? She did not feel that it was quite appropriate that the person most interested about poor Walter's slayer should be Walter's successor, he who had most profited by the deed.

Geoff, however, had his way, and went to his cousin Mary with a great deal of caution and anxiety, to hear all that she knew, and carefully to conceal from her what he knew. He found her fortunately by herself, in the languor of the afternoon, even Annie and Fanny having left her for some garden game or other. Lady Stanton, the younger, was much surprised to see her young cousin, and startled by his sudden appearance.

"What is the matter?" she asked, with a woman's ready terror; and was still more surprised that nothing was the matter, and that Geoff was but paying her a simple visit. It may even be suspected that for a moment his mother's alarm communicated itself to Mary. Was it to see *her* the boy had come back so soon and so far? The innocent, kind woman was alarmed. She had known herself a beauty for years, and she knew the common opinion (not in her experience quite corroborated by fact) that for a beautiful face a man will commit any folly. Was she in danger ("at my age!") of becoming a difficulty and a trouble to Geoff? But Geoff soon relieved her mind, making her blush hotly at her own self-conceit and folly.

"I have come to ask you some questions," he said; "you remember the man, the poacher, whom you spoke to me about—the brother, you know?—Bampfylde, whom they call Wild Bampfylde?"

"I know," said Lady Stanton, with a suppressed shiver.

"I met him—the other night—and we got talking. I want you to tell me, cousin Mary: did you ever hear of—another of them—a brother they had?"

"Ah! that is it," said Lady Stanton, clasping her hands together.

"That is what? Do you know anything about him? I should like to find out; from something they—from something this poacher fellow said—he is not a bad fellow," said Geoff, in an undertone, with a kind of apology in his mind, to the vagrant of whom he seemed to be speaking disrespectfully.

"Oh, Geoff, don't have anything to do with them, dear. You don't know the ways of people like that. Young men think it is fine to show that they are above the prejudices of their class, but it never comes to any good. Poor Walter, if he had never seen her face might have been—and poor John—"

"But, Cousin Mary, about the brother?"

"Yes: I knew he was their brother. I can't remember how I found it out. He was very clever, they said, and a scholar, but ashamed to belong to such poor people. He never went there when he could help it. He took no notice, I believe, of the others. He pretended to be a stranger visiting the Lakes."

"Cur!" said Geoff.

"Ye—es: it was not—nice—but it must be a temptation, Geoff, when a man has been brought up so differently. Some relation had given him his education, and he was very clever. I have never felt sure whether it was a happy thing for a boy to be brought so far out of his class. He met John Musgrave somewhere, but John did not know who he was. And just about the time it all happened he went away. I used to think perhaps he might have known something; but I suppose he thought it would all come out, and his family be known. Fancy being ashamed of your own mother, Geoff! But it was hard upon him too—an old woman who would tell your fortune—who would stand with her basket in the market, you know: and he, a great scholar, and considered a gentleman. It *was* hard; I don't excuse him, but I was sorry for him; and I always thought if he came back again, that he might know——"

Lady Stanton was not accustomed to speak so long and continuously. Her delicate cheeks were stained with red patches; her breath came quick.

"Do you mean to say he has turned up again—at last?" she added, with a little gasp.

"I have heard of him," said Geoff. "I wondered—if he could have anything to do with it."

"I will tell you all about him, Geoff. It was John Musgrave who met with him somewhere. Mary could tell you, too. She was John's only sister, and I her great friend; and I always took an interest. They met, I think, abroad—and he—was of use to John somehow—I forget exactly—that is to say, Mr Bampfild (he

spelt his name differently from the others) did something for him—in short, John said he saved his life. It was among the Alps, on some precipice, or something of that sort. You see I can only give you my recollection,” said Lady Stanton, falteringly conscious of remembering everything about it. “John asked him to Penninghame, but he would not come. He told us this new friend of his knew the country quite well, but no one could get out of him where he had lived. And then he came on a visit to someone else—to the Pykes, at Langdale—that was the family; and we all knew him. He was very handsome; but who was to suppose that a gentleman visiting in such a house was old ‘Lizabeth’s son, or—or—that girl’s brother? No one thought of such a thing. It was John who found it out at the very last. It was because of something about myself. Oh, Geoff, I was not offended—I was only sorry. Poor fellow! he was wrong, but it was hard upon him. He thought he—took a fancy to me; but poor John was so indignant. No, I assure you not on that account,” said Lady Stanton, growing crimson to the eyes, and becoming incoherent. “Never! we were like brother and sister. John never had such a thought in his mind. I always—always took an interest in him—but there was never anything of that kind.”

Young Geoff felt himself blush too, as he listened to this confession. He coloured in sympathy and tender fellow-feeling for her; for it was not hard to read between the lines of Cousin Mary’s humble story. John “never had such a thought in his mind;” but she “had always taken an interest.” And the blush on her cheek, and the water in her eyes told of that interest still.

Then Geoff grew redder still, with another feeling. The madman in the cottage had dared to lift his eyes to this woman so much above him.

“I don’t wonder Musgrave was furious,” he cried.

“That was the right word,” she

said, with a faint smile; “he was furious; and Walter—your brother—laughed. I did not like that—it was insulting. We were all young people together. Why should not he have cared for—me?—when both of them——. But we must not think of that—we must not talk of that, Geoff—we cannot blame your poor brother. He is dead, poor fellow; and such a death, in the very flower of his youth! What were a few little silly boyish faults to that? He died, you know, and all the trouble came. Walter had been very stinging—very insulting, to that poor fellow just the day before, and he could not bear it. He went off that very day, and I have never heard of him again. I don’t think people in general even knew who he was. The Pykes do not to this day. But Walter’s foolish joking drove him away. Poor Walter, he had a way of talking—and I suppose he must have found the secret out—or guessed. I have often—often wondered whether Mr. Bampfild knew anything, whether if he had come back he would have said anything about any quarrel between them. I used to pray for him to be found, and then I used to pray that he might not be found; for I always thought he could throw some light—and, after all, what could that light be but of one kind?”

“Did any one ever—suspect—him?”

“Geoff! you frighten me. Him! whom? You know who was suspected. I don’t think it was intended, Geoff. I know—I know he did not mean it; but who but one could have done it? There could not, alas, be any doubt about that.”

“If Bampfylde had been insulted and made angry, as you say, why should not he have been suspected as well as Musgrave? The one, it seems to me, was just as likely as the other——”

“Geoff! you take away my breath! But he was away; he left the day before.”

“Suppose it was found out that he



did not go away, Cousin Mary! Was he more or less likely than Musgrave was to have done a crime?"

Lady Stanton looked at him with her eyes wide open, and her lips apart.

"You do not—mean anything? You have not—found out anything, Geoff?"

"I—can't tell," he said. "I think I have got a clue. If it were found out that Bampfylde did not go away—that he was still here, and met poor Walter that fatal morning, what would you say then, you who know them all?"

All the colour ebbed out of Lady Stanton's face. She kept looking at him with wistful eyes, into which tears had risen, questioning him with an earnestness beyond speech.

"I dare not say the words," she said, faltering; "I don't venture to say the words. But Geoff, you would not speak like this if you did not mean something. Do you think—really think—oh, it is not possible—it is not possible!—it is only a fancy. You can't—suppose—that it matters—much—to me. You are only—speculating. Perhaps it ought not to matter much to me. But oh, Geoff! if you knew what that time was in my life. Do you mean anything—do you mean anything, my dear?"

"You have not answered my question," he said. "Which was the most likely to have done a crime?"

Lady Stanton wrung her hands; she could not speak, but kept her eyes upon him in beseeching suspense.

Geoff felt that he had raised a spirit beyond his power to calm again, and he had not intended to commit himself or betray so soon what he had heard.

"Nothing must be known as yet," he said; "but I think I have some reason to speak. Bampfylde did not leave the country when you thought he did. He saw poor Walter that morning. If Musgrave saw him at all——"

Lady Stanton gave a little cry—"You mean Walter, Geoff!"

"Yes; if Musgrave saw him at all, it was not till after. And Bampfylde was the brother of the girl John was going to marry, and had saved his life."

"My God!" This was no profane exclamation in Mary's mouth. She said it low to herself, clasping her hands together, her face utterly colourless, her eyes wild with wonder and excitement. The shock of this disclosure had driven away the rising tears: and yet Geoff did not mean it as a disclosure. He had trusted in the gentle slowness of her understanding. But there are cases in which feeling supplies all, and more than all, that intellect could give. She said nothing, but sat there silent, with her hands clasped, thinking it over, piecing everything together. No one like Mary had kept hold of every detail; she remembered everything as clearly as if (God forbid!) it had happened yesterday. She put one thing to another which she remembered but no one else did: and gradually it all became clear to her. Geoff, though he was so much more clever, did not understand the process by which in silence she arranged and perceived every point; but then Geoff had not the minute acquaintance with the subject nor the feeling which touched every point with interest. By and by Mary began to sob, her gentle breast heaving with emotion. "Oh, Geoff," she cried, "what a heart—what a heart! He is like our Saviour; he has given his life for his enemy. Not even his friend; he was not fond of him; he did not love him. Who could love him—a man who was ashamed of his own, his very own people? I—oh, how little and how poor we are! I might have done it perhaps for my friend; but he—he is like our Saviour."

"Don't say so. It was not just—it was not right; he ought not to have done it," cried Geoff. "Think, if it saved something, how much trouble it has made."

"Then it is all true!" she cried, triumphant. In perfect good faith and

tender feeling Mary had made her comment upon this strange, sad revelation; yet she could not but feel all the same the triumph of having thus caught Geoff, and of establishing beyond all doubt that it was true. She fell a-crying in the happiness of the discovery. The moment it was certain, the solemnity of it blew aside, as do the mists before the wind. "Then he will come home again; he will have his poor little children, and all will be well," she said; and cried as if her heart would break. It was vain for Geoff to tell her that nothing was as yet proved, that he did not know how to approach the subject; no difficulties troubled Mary. Her heart was delivered as of a load; and why should not everything at once be told? But she wept all the same, and Geoff had no clue to the meaning of her tears. She was glad beyond measure for John Musgrave: but yet—While he was an exile, who had (secretly) stood up for him as she had done? But when he came home, what would Mary have to do with him? Nothing! She would never see him, though she had always taken an interest, and he would never know what interest she had taken. How glad she was! and yet how the tears poured down!

Geoff had a long ride home. He was half alarmed that he had allowed so much to be known, but yet he had not revealed 'Lizabeth's secret. Mary had required no particulars, no proof. The suggestion was enough for her. She was not judge or jury—but one to whom the slightest outlet from that dark maze meant full illumination. Geoff could not but speculate a little on the surface of the subject as he rode along through the soft evening, in that unbroken yet active solitude which makes a long ride or walk the most pleasant and sure moment for "thinking over." Geoff's thoughts were quite superficial, as his knowledge was. He wondered if John Musgrave had "taken an interest" in Mary as she had done in him; and how it was that Mary had

been his brother's betrothed, yet with so warm a sympathy for his brother's supposed slayer? And how it was that John Musgrave, if he had responded at all to the "interest" she took in him, could have loved and married Lily? All this perplexed Geoff. He did not go any deeper; he did not think of the mingled feelings of the present moment, but only of the tangled web of the past.

It grew dark before he got home. No moon, and a cloudy night, disturbed by threatnings or rather promise of rain, which the farmers were anxious for, as they generally are, when a short break of fine weather bewilders their operations, in the north. As he turned out of the last cross road, and got upon the straight way to Stanton, he suddenly became aware of some one running by him on the green turf that edged the road, and in the shadow of the hedgerow. Geoff was startled by the first sight of this moving shadow running noiselessly by his side. It was a safe country where there was no danger from thieves, and a "highwayman" was a thing of the last century. But still Geoff shortened his whip in his hand with a certain sense of insecurity. As he did so, a voice came from the shadow of the hedge. "It is but me, my young lord," "You!" he cried. He was relieved by the sound, for a close attendant on the road in the dark, when all faces are alike undiscernible, is not pleasant. "What are you doing here, Bampfylde? Are you snaring my birds, or scaring them, or have you come to look after me?"

"Neither the one nor the other," said Wild Bampfylde. "I have other thoughts in my mind than the innocent creatures that harm no one. My young lord, I cannot tell you what is coming, but something is coming. It's no you, and it's no me, but it's in the air; and I'm about whatever happens. If you want me, I'll aye be within call. Not that I'm spying on you, but whatever happens I'm here."

"And I want you. I want to ask

you something," cried Geoff; but he was slow in putting his next question. It was about his cousin; and what he wanted was some one who would see, without forcing him to put them into words, the thoughts that arose in his mind. Therefore it was a long time before he spoke again. But in the silence that ensued it soon became evident to Geoff that the figure running along under shadow of the bushes had disappeared. He stopped his horse, but heard no footfall. "Are you there, Bampfylde?" but his own voice was all he heard, falling with startling effect into the silence. The vagrant had disappeared, and not a creature was near. Geoff went on with a strange mixture of satisfaction and annoyance. To have this wanderer "about" seemed a kind of aid, and yet to have his movements spied upon did not please the young man. But Bampfylde was no spy.

#### CHAPTER XXIV.

##### BACK AGAIN AT THE CASTLE.

THE Squire went home after his game of ducks and drakes in the most curious, bewildered state of mind. The shock of all these recent events had affected him much more than any one was aware, and Randolph's visit and desire to make sure about "family arrangements," had filled up the already almost overflowing measure of secret pain. It had momentarily recalled, like a stimulant too sharp and strong, not only his usual power of resistance, but a force of excitement strong enough to overwhelm the faculties which for the time it invigorated; and while he walked about his woods after his first interview with his son, the Squire was on the edge of a catastrophe, his brain reeling, his strained powers on the verge of giving way. The encounter with little Nello on the lake side had exercised a curious arresting power upon the old and worn edifice of the mind which was just then tottering to its fall. It stopped

this fall for the moment. The trembling old walls were not perhaps in a less dangerous state, but the wind that had threatened them dropped, and the building stood, shaken to its foundation, and at the mercy of the next blast, but yet so far safe—safe for the moment, and with all the semblance of calm about it. To leave metaphor, the Squire's mind was hushed and lulled by that encounter with the soft peacefulness of childhood, in the most curious, and to himself inexplicable way. Not, indeed, that he tried to explain. He was as unconscious of what was going on in himself as most of us are. He did not know that the various events which had shaken him had anything more than pain in them—he was unaware of the danger. Even Randolph's appearance and the thought of the discussions which must go on when his back was turned, as to the things that would happen after his death—he was not aware that there was more in them than an injury against which his whole spirit revolted. He did not know that this new annoyance had struck at the very stronghold of vitality, the little strength left to him. Which of us does know when the *coup-de-grace* is given? He only knew the hurt—the wound—and the forlorn stand he had made against it, and almost giddy lightness with which he had tried to himself to smile it down, and feel himself superior. Neither did he know what Nello had done for him. His meeting with the child was like the touch of something soft and healing upon a wound. The contact cooled and calmed his entire being. It seemed to put out of his mind all sense of wounding and injury. It did more; it took all distinctness at once from the moral and the physical landmarks round him. The harsher outlines of life grew blurred and dim, and instead of the bitter facts of the past, which he had so long determined to ignore, and the facts of the present which had so pushed themselves upon him, the atmosphere fell all into a

soft confusion. A kind of happiness stole over him. What had he to be happy about? yet he was so. Sometimes in our English summers there is a mist of heat in the air, confusing all the lines of the landscape as much as a fog in winter—in which the hills and lakes and sky are nothing but one dazzle and faint glory of suppressed light and warmth—light confusing but penetrating: warmth perhaps stifling to the young and active, but consolatory to those whose blood runs chill. This was the mental condition in which the Squire was. His troubles seemed to die away, though he had so many of them. Randolph, his middle-aged son, ceased to be an assailant and invader, and dropped into the dark like other troublesome things—not a son to be proud of, but one to put up with easily enough. John? he did not remember much about John; but he remembered very distinctly his old playfellow little Johnny, his little brother. "Eighteen months—only eighteen months between them:" he almost could hear the tone in which his mother said that long ago. If Johnny had lived he would have been—how old would he have been now? Johnny would have been seventy-five or so had he lived—but the Squire did not identify the number of years. There was eighteen months between them, that was all he could remember, and of that he sat and mused, often saying the words over to himself, with a soft dreamy smile upon his face. He was often not quite clear that it was not Johnny himself, little Johnny, with whom he had been playing on the water-side.

This change affected him in all things. He had never been so entirely amiable. When Randolph returned to the assault, the Squire would smile and make no reply. He was no longer either irritated or saddened by anything his son might say—indeed he did not take much notice of him one way or another, but would speak of the weather, or take up a book, smiling, when his son began. This was very

bewildering to the family. Randolph who was dull and self-important, was driven half frantic by it, thinking that his father meant to insult him. But the Squire had no purpose of any kind, and Mary, who knew him better, at last grew vaguely alarmed without knowing what she feared. He kept up all his old habits, took his walks as usual, dressed with his ordinary care—but did everything in a vague and hazy way, requiring to be recalled to himself, when anything important happened. When he was in his library, where he had read and written, and studied so much, the Squire arranged all his tools as usual, opened his book, even began to write his letters, putting the date—but did no more. Having accomplished that beginning, he would lean back in his chair and muse for hours together. It was not thinking even, but only musing; no subject abode with him in these long still hours, and not even any consistent thread of recollections. Shadows of the past came sailing—floating about him, that was all; very often only that soft, wandering thought about little Johnny, occupied all his faculties—. Eighteen months between them, no more! He rarely got beyond that fact, though he never could quite tell whether it was the little brother's face or another—his son's, or his son's son's—which floated through this mist of recollections. He was quite happy in the curious trance which had taken possession of him. He had no active personal feelings, except that of pleasure in the recollection and thought of little Johnny—a thought which pleased and amused, and touched his heart. All anger and harm went out of the old man, he spoke softly when he spoke at all, and suffered himself to be disturbed as he never would have done before. Indeed he was far too gentle and good to be natural. The servants talked of his condition with dismay, yet with that agreeable anticipation of something new, which makes even a "death in the house" more or less desirable. "Th' owd Squire's not long

for this world," the cook and Tom Gardiner said to each other. As for Eastwood, he shook his head with mournful importance. "I give you my word, I might drop a trayful of things at his side, and he wouldn't take no notice," the man said, almost tearfully, "it's clean again nature that is." And the other servants shook their heads, and said in their turn that they didn't like the looks of him, and that certainly the Squire was not long for this world.

The same event of Randolph's visit had produced other results almost as remarkable. It had turned little Lilius all at once into the slim semblance of a woman, grown-up, and full of thoughts. It is perhaps too much to say that she had grown in outward appearance as suddenly as she had done in mind; but it is no unusual thing in the calmest domestic quiet, where no commotion is, nor fierce, sudden heat of excitement to quicken a tardy growth, that the elder members of a family should wake up all in a moment to notice how a child has grown. She had perhaps been springing up gradually; but now in a moment every one perceived; and the moment was coincident with that in which Lilius heard with unspeakable wrath, horror, shame, pity, and indignation, her father's story—that he would be put in prison if he came back; that he dared not come back; that he might be—executed. (Lilius would not permit even her thoughts to say hanged—most ignominious of all endings—though Miss Brown had not hesitated to employ the word.) This suggestion had struck into her soul like a fiery arrow. The guilt suggested might have impressed her imagination also; but the horrible reality of the penalty had gone through and through the child. All the wonderful enterprises she had planned on the moment are past our telling. She would go to the Queen and get his pardon. She would go to the old woman on the hills and find out everything. Ah! what would she not do?

And then had come the weary pilgrimage which Geoff had intercepted; and now the ache of pity and terror had yielded to that spell of suspense which, more than anything else, takes the soul out of itself. What had come to the child? Miss Brown said; and all the maids and Martuccia watched her without saying anything. Miss Brown, who had been the teller of the story, did not identify its connection with this result. She said, and all the female household said, that if Miss Lily had been a little older, they knew what they would have thought. And the only woman in the house who took no notice was Mary—herself so full of anxieties that her mind had little leisure for speculation. She said, yes, Lilius had grown; yes, she was changing. But what time had she to consider Lilius' looks in detail? Randolph was Mary's special cross; he was always about, always in her way, making her father uncomfortable, talking at the children. Mary felt herself hustled about from place to place, wearied and worried and kept in perpetual commotion. She would not look into the causes of the Squire's strange looks and ways; she could not give her attention to the children; she could scarcely even do her business, into which Randolph would fain have found his way, while her all-investigating brother was close by. Would he but go away and leave the harassed household in peace!

But Randolph for his part was not desirous of going away. He could not go away, he represented to himself, without coming to some understanding with his father, though that understanding seemed as far off as ever. So he remained from day to day, acting as a special irritant to the whole household. He had nothing to do, and consequently he roamed about the garden, pointing out to the gardener a great many imperfections in his work; and about the stables, driving well-nigh out of his wits the steady-going, respectable groom, who now-a-days had things very much



his own way. He found fault with the wine, making himself obnoxious to Eastwood, and with the made dishes, exasperating Cook. Indeed there was nothing disagreeable which this visitor did not do to set his father's house by the ears. Finally, sauntering into the drawing-room, where Mary sat, driven by him out of her favourite hall, where his comments offended her more than she could bear, he reached the climax of all previous exasperations by suddenly urging upon her the undeniable fact that Nello ought to go to school. "The boy," Randolph called him; nothing would have induced him to employ any pet name to a child, especially a foreign name like Nello—his virtue was of too severe an order to permit any such trifling. He burst out with this advice all at once. "You should send the boy to school; he ought to be at school. Old Pen's lessons are rubbish. The boy should be at school, Mary," he said. This sudden fulmination disturbed Mary beyond anything that had gone before, for it was quite just and true. "And I know a place—a nice homely, good sort of place, where he would be well taught and well taken care of," he added. "Why should not you get him ready at once? and I will place him there on my way home." This was, to do him justice, a sudden thought, not premeditated—an idea which had flashed into his mind since he began to speak, but which immediately gained attractiveness to him, when he saw the consternation in Mary's eyes.

"Oh, thank you, Randolph," she said, faintly. Had not Mr. Pen advised—had not she herself thought of asking her brother's advice, who was himself the father of a boy, and no doubt knew better about education than she did? "But," she added, faltering, "he could not be got ready in a moment; it would require a little time. I fear that it would not be possible, though it is so very kind."

"Possible? Oh, yes, easily pos-

sible, if you give your mind to it," cried Randolph; and he pointed out to her at great length the advantages of the plan, while Mary sat trembling, in spite of herself, feeling that her horror of the idea was unjustifiable, and that she would probably have no excuse for rejecting so reasonable and apparently kind a proposal. Was it kind? It seemed so on the outside; and how could she venture to impute bad motives to Randolph, when he offered to serve her? She did not know what reply to make; but her mind was thrown into sudden and most unreasonable agitation. She got up at last, agitated and tremulous, and explained that she was compelled to go out to visit some of her poor people. "I have not been in the village since you came," she said, breathless in her explanations; and there are several who are ill; and I have something to say to Mr. Pen."

"Oh, yes, consult old Pen, of course," Randolph had said. "I would not deprive a lady of her usual spiritual adviser because she happens to be my sister. Of course you must talk it over with Pen." This assumption of her dependence upon poor Mr. Pen's advice galled Mary, who had by no means elected Mr. Pen to be her spiritual adviser. However, she would not stay to argue the question, but hurried away anxiously with a sense of escape. She had escaped for the moment; yet she had a painful sense in her mind that she could not always escape from Randolph. The proposal was sudden, but it was reasonable and kind—quite kind. It was the thing a good uncle ought to do; no one would but think better of Randolph that he was willing to take so much trouble. Randolph for his part felt that it was very kind; he had no other meaning in the original suggestion; but when he had thus once put it forth, a curious expansion of the idea came into his mind. Little Nello was a terrible bugbear to Randolph. He had long dwelt upon the thought that it was he who would

succeed to Penninghame on his father's death—at first, perhaps, nominally on John's account. But there was very little chance that John would dare the dangers of a trial, and reappear again, to be arraigned for murder, of which crime Randolph had always simply and stolidly believed him guilty; and the younger brother had entertained no doubt that, sooner or later, the unquestioned inheritance would fall into his hands. But this child baffled all his plans. What could be done while he was there? though there was no proof who he was, and none that he was legitimate, or anything but a little impostor: certainly, he was as far from being a lawful and proper English heir—such as an old family like the Musgraves ought to have—such as his own boy would be, as could be supposed. But of course, the best that could be done for him was to send him to school. It was only of Nello that Randolph thought in this way. The little girl, though a more distinct individual, did not trouble him. She might be legitimate enough—another Mary, to whom, of course, Mary would leave her money—and there would be an end of it. Randolph did not believe, even if there had been no girl of John's, that Mary's money would ever come his way. She would alienate it rather, he felt sure—found a hospital for cats, or something of that description (for Mary was nothing but a typical old maid to Randolph, who regarded her as an unmarried woman, with much masculine and married contemptuousness), rather than let it come to his side of the family. So let that pass—let the girl pass; but for the boy! That little, small, baby-faced Nello—a little nothing—a creature that might be crushed by a strong hand—a thing unprotected, unacknowledged, without either power or influence, or any one to care for him! how he stood in Randolph's way! But he did not at this moment mean him any harm; that is, no particular harm. The school he had suddenly thought

of had nothing wrong in it; it was a school for the sons of poor clergymen, and people in "reduced circumstances." It would do Nello a great deal of good. It would clear his mind from any foolish notion of being the heir. And he would be out of the way, and once at school, there is no telling what may happen between the years of ten and twenty. But of one thing, Randolph was quite sure—that he meant no harm, no particular harm, to the boy.

When Mary left him in this hurried way, he strolled out in search of something to amuse or employ the lingering afternoon. Tom Gardiner now gave him nothing but sullen answers, and the groom began to dash about pails of water, and make hideous noises as soon as he appeared, so that it did not consist with his dignity to have anything more to say to these functionaries; so that sheer absence of occupation, mingled with a sudden interest in the boy, on whose behalf he had thus been suddenly "led" to interfere, induced Randolph to look for the children. They were not in their favourite place at the door of the old hall, and he turned his steps instinctively to the side of the water, the natural attraction to everybody at Penninghame. When he came within sight of the little cove where the boats lay, he saw that it was occupied by the little group he sought. He went towards them with some eagerness, though not with any sense of interest or natural beauty such as would have moved most people. Nello was seated on the edge of the rocky step relieved against the blue water; Liliias placed higher up with the wind ruffling her brown curls, and the slant sunshine grazing her cheek. The boy had a book open on his knees, but was trying furtive ducks and drakes under cover of the lesson, except when Liliias recalled him to it, when he resumed his learning with much demonstration, saying it over under his breath with visibly moving lips. Liliias had got through her own portion of study.

Mr. Pen's lessons were not long or severe, and she had a girl's conscientiousness and quickness in learning. Her book was closed on her knee; her head turned a little towards that road which she watched with a long dreamy gaze, looking for some one; but some one very visionary and far away. Her pensive, abstracted look and pose, and the sudden growth and development which had so suddenly changed Lilius, seemed to have charmed the little girl out of childhood altogether. Was she looking already for the fairy prince, the visionary hero? And to say the truth, though she was still only a child, this was exactly what Lilius was doing. It was the knight-deliverer, the St. George who kills the dragon, the prince with shoes of swiftness and invisible coat, brought down to common life, and made familiar by being entitled "Mr. Geoff." for whom, with that kind of visionary childish anticipation which takes no note of possibilities, she was looking. Time and the world are at once vaster, and vaguer, and more narrow at her age, than at any other. He might come *now*, suddenly appearing at any moment; and Lilius could not but feel vaguely disappointed every moment that he did not appear. And yet there was no knowing when he would come, to-morrow, next year, she could not tell when. Meanwhile she kept her eyes fixed on the distance, watching for him. But Lilius was not thinking of herself in conjunction with "Mr. Geoff." She was much too young for love; no flutter of even possible sentiment disturbed the serenity of her soul. Nevertheless her mind was concentrated upon the young hero as entirely as the mind of any dreaming maiden could be. He was more than her hero; he was her representative, doing for her the work which perhaps Lilius was not old enough or strong enough to do. So other people, grown-up people, thought at least. And until he came she could do nothing, know nothing. Already, by this means, the

child had taken up the burden of her womanhood. Her eyes "were busy in the distance shaping things, that made her heart beat quick." She was waiting already, not for love to come, of which at her age she knew nothing; but for help to come which she would have given her little life to bestow, but could not, her own hand being too slight and feeble to give help. This thought gave her a pang, while the expectation of help kept her in that woman's purgatory of suspense. Why could not she do it herself? but yet there was a certain sweetness in the expectation which was vague, and had not existed long enough to be tedious. And yet how long, how long it was since yesterday! From daylight to dusk, even in August, what a world of time. Every one of these slow, big round hours, floated by Lilius like clouds when there is no wind, moving imperceptibly; great globes of time never to be done with. Her heart gave a throb whenever any one appeared. But it was Tom Gardiner, it was Mr. Pen, it was some one from the village, it was never Mr. Geoff; and finally here was some one quite antagonistic, the enemy in person, the stranger whom people called Uncle Randolph. Lilius gave her little brother a note of warning; and she opened her own book again.

When Randolph approached, they had thus the air of being very busily employed: both, Lilius intent upon her book, while Nello, furtively feeling in his pocket for the stones which he had stored there for use, busied himself, to all appearance, with his lesson, repeating it to himself with moving lips. Randolph had taken very little notice of the children, except by talking at them to his sister. He came to a pause now, and looked at them with curiosity—or at least he looked at Nello; for after all, it did not matter about the girl. She might be John's daughter, or she might not; but in any case she was not worth a thought. He did not see the humour of the preternatural closeness of study which the

children exhibited; but it afforded a means of opening communications.

"Are these your lessons for Mr. Pennithorne?" he said.

Nello, to whom the question was addressed, made no answer. Was he not much too busy to answer? his eyes were riveted upon his book. Lilius kept silence too as long as politeness would let her; but at last the rudeness of it struck her acutely. This might be an enemy, but children ought not to be rude. She therefore said timidly, "Yes;" and added, by way of explanation, "Nello's is Latin, but me, it is only English I have."

"Is it hard?" said Randolph, still directing his question to the boy.

Nello gave a glance out of the corner of his eyes at his questioner, but said nothing, only learned harder than ever; and again it became needful, for the sake of courtesy, that Lilius should answer.

"The Latin is not hard," she said; "oh, not near so hard as the English. It is so easy to say; but Mr. Pen does not know how it goes; he says it all wrong; he says it like English. I hope Nello will not learn it that way."

Randolph stared at her, but took no further notice.

"Can't you speak?" he said to Nello, "when I ask you a question? Stop your lesson and listen to me. Shouldn't you like to go to school?"

Nello looked up with round astonished eyes, and equally roundly with all the force of the monosyllable, said "No," as probably he would have answered to any question.

"No! but you don't know what school is; not lessons only, but a number of fellows to play with, and all kinds of games. You would like it a great deal better than being here, and learning with Mr. Pennithorne."

"No," said Nello again; but his tone was less sure, and he paused to look into his questioner's face. "Would Lily come too?" he said, suddenly accepting the idea. For from no to yes is not a very long way at ten years old.

"Why, you don't want to drag a girl with you," said Randolph, laughing; "a girl who can't play at anything, wherever you go!"

This argument secured Nello's attention. He said, "N—no," reddening a little, and with a glance at Lilius, against whose sway he dared scarcely rebel all at once; but the sense of superiority even at such an early age is sweet.

"He must not go without me," cried Lilius, roused. "I am to take care of him *always*! Papa said so. Oh, don't listen, Nello, to this—gentleman! You know what I told you—papa is perhaps coming home. Mr. Geoff said—Mr. Geoff knows something that will make everything right again. Mr. Geoff is going to fetch papa——"

"Oh!" cried Nello, reproachfully, "you said I was not to tell; and there you have gone and told yourself!"

"What is that? what is that?" asked Randolph, pricking up his ears.

But the boy and girl looked at each other and were silent. The curious uncle felt that he would most willingly have whipped them both, and that amiable sentiment showed itself in his face.

"And, Lily," said Nello, "I think the old gentleman would not let me go. He will want me to play with; he has never had anybody to play with for—I don't know how long—never since a little boy called little Johnny: and he said that was my name, too——"

"Oh, Nello! now it is you who are forgetting; he said (you know you told me) that you were never, never to tell!"

Randolph turned from one to another, bewildered. What did they mean? Had they the audacity to play upon his fears, the little foundlings, the little impostors! He drew a long breath of fury, and clenched his fist involuntarily. "Children should never have secrets," he said. "Do you know it is wicked, very wicked? You ought to be whipped for it. Tell me directly what you mean!"

But this is not the way to get at

any child's secret. The brother and sister looked at each other, and shut fast their mouths. As for Nello, he felt the edges of that stone in his pocket, and thought he would like to throw it at the man. Liliás had no stone, and was not warlike; but she looked at him with the calm of superior knowledge. "It would be dishonourable," she said, faltering over the pronunciation, but firm in the sentiment, "to tell what we were told not to tell."

"You are going to school with me—on Saturday," said Randolph, with a virulence of irritation which children are just as apt to call forth as their elders. "You will be taught better there; you will not venture to conceal anything, I can tell you, my boy."

And he left them with an angry determination to carry out his plans, and to give over Nello to hands that would tame him effectually, "the best thing for him." The children, though they had secretly enjoyed his discomfiture, were a little appalled by this conclusion. "Oh, Nello, I will tell you what he is—he is the wicked uncle in the *Babes in the Wood*. He will take you and leave you somewhere, where you will lose yourself and starve, and never be heard of. But I will find you. I will go after you. I will never leave you!" cried Liliás with sudden tears.

"I could ask which way to go," said Nello, much impressed, however, by this view. "I can speak English now. I could ask the way home, or something better! Listen, Lily—if he takes me, when we have gone ten miles, or a hundred miles, I will run away!"

#### CHAPTER XXV.

##### A NEW VISITOR.

NOTWITHSTANDING her dislike to have it supposed that Mr. Pen was her spiritual adviser, Mary did make a hurried visit to the vicarage to ask his advice. Not that she had much confidence in the good vicar's advice; but

to act in such a case, where experience fails you altogether, entirely on your own judgment without even the comfort of "talking it over" is a hard thing to do. "Talking it over" is always an advantage. The for and against of any argument are always clearer when they are put into words, and made audible, and thus acquire, as it were, though they may be your own words, a separate existence. Thus Mary became her own adviser when she consulted Mr. Pen, and there was no one else at hand who could fulfil this office. They talked it over anxiously, Mr. Pen being, as she knew he would be, entirely on Randolph's side. To him it appeared that it would be a great advantage for Nello to be taken to school by his uncle. It would be "the right thing to do"—better than if Mary did it—better than Mr. Pen himself could do it. Mary could not find any arguments to meet this conventional certainty. She retained her distrust and fear, but she could not say anything against the fact that it was kind of Randolph to propose this, and that it would be injurious and unkind on her part to reject it. She went home dispirited and cast down, but set to work at once with the practical preparations. Saturday was the day on which Randolph had said he must go—and it was already Thursday—and there was not a moment to lose. But it was not till the Friday afternoon, the eve of separation, that Miss Musgrave could screw her courage to the point of informing the children what lay before them. The afternoon was half over, and the sun beginning to send long rays aslant from the west. She came in from the village where she had gone in mere restlessness, feeling that this communication could be delayed no longer; but she disliked it so much herself that the thought of Nello's consternation and the tears of Liliás was almost more than Mary could bear.

But when she came in sight of the old hall door, a group encountered her



which bewildered Mary. A young man on horseback had drawn up at the side of the ascent, and with his hat off, and the sun shining upon his curling hair and smiling countenance, was looking up and talking to little Lilius, who leaned over the low wall, like a lady of romance looking over her battlements. The sun gleamed full upon Lilius, too, lighting up her dark eyes and warmly-tinted cheek, and the hair which hung about her shoulders, and making a pretty picture. Her face was full of earnest meaning, grave and eager and tremulous. Nello, at the hall door, above this strange pair, contemplating them with a mixture of jealousy and wonder. Mary had come upon them so suddenly that she could hear the young man answering something to the eager demands of the little girl. "But you are sure, quite sure? Oh, are you certain, Mr. Geoff?"

"Quite sure," he was saying. "But you must think of me all the time, Lily; you must think of nothing but me—promise me that, and I shall not be afraid."

"I promise!" cried Lilius, clasping her hands. Mary stood and listened altogether confounded, and Nello, from above, bewildered and only half satisfied, looked on. Who was the young man? It seemed to Miss Musgrave that she had seen him before. And what was it that had changed Lilius into this little princess, this small heroine? The heroic, however, gave way before Mary could interfere, and the child murmured something softer, something less unlike the little girl with all whose ways Mary was familiar.

"But I always think of you," she said; "always! since *that* day."

"Do you, indeed, my little Lily? That makes me happy. You must always keep up so good a custom."

And the young man smiled, with eyes full of tenderness, and took the child's hand and held it in his own. Lilius was too young for any comment or false interpretation, but what did it mean? The spectator behind, besides, was too much astonished to move.

"Good-bye, my Lily; good-bye, Nello," cried the young man, nodding his head to the children. And then he put on his hat, and rode round the corner towards the door.

Lilius stood looking after him, like a little saint in an ecstasy. She clasped her hands again, and looked up to the sky, her lips moving, and tears glittering in her eyes.

"Oh, Nello, don't you think God will help him?" she said, one tear overbrimming suddenly, and rolling down her cheek. She started when Mary, with tones a little sharpened by consternation, called her. Lilius had no sense of shame in her innocent mind, but as there is no telling in what light those curious beings called grown-up people, may regard a child's actions, a little thrill of alarm went through her. What might Mary say? What would she think when she knew that Mr. Geoff "had come to set everything right about papa?" Lilius felt instinctively that Geoff's mission would not appear in exactly the same light to Mary as it did to herself. She turned round with a sudden flush of surprise and agitation on her face. It looked like the blush of a maturer sentiment to Mary.

"At twelve years old!" she said to herself. And unconsciously there glanced through her mind a recollection of the first Lily—the child's mother—she who had been the beginning of all the trouble. Was it in the blood?

"Who is that gentleman?" Mary asked, with much disturbance of mind. "Lilius! I could not have expected this of you."

Lilius came in, very still and pale, feeling herself a culprit, though she did not know why. Her hands dropped straight by her side, after the manner of a creature accused; and she looked up to Mary, with eyes full of vague alarm, into which the tears were ready to come at a moment's notice.

"I have not done anything wrong?" she said, turning her assertion into a faltering question. "It was Mr. Geoff."

"Mr. Geoff?—who is Mr. Geoff?"

"He is—very kind—oh, very kind, Mary; he is—some one who knows about papa: he is—the gentleman who once came with two beautiful horses in a carriage (oh, don't you remember, Nello?) to see *you*."

"Yes," said Nello, with ready testimony; "he said I should ride upon them. They were two bay horses, in one of those high-up funny carriages, not like Mary's carriage. I wonder if I might ride upon his horse now?"

"To see *me*?" Mary was entirely bewildered. "And what do you mean about your father?" she said. "Knows about papa! Liliass! come here, I am not angry. What does he know about papa?"

Liliass came up slowly to her side, half unwilling to communicate her own knowledge on this point. For Mary had not told her the secret, she remembered suddenly. But the confusion of Liliass was interrupted by something more startling and agitating. Eastwood came into the hall, with a certain importance and solemnity. "If you please, ma'am," he said, "my Lord Stanton has just come in, and I've shown him into the library—to my master. I thought you would like to know."

"Lord Stanton—to my father, Eastwood! my father ought not to be troubled with strangers. Lord Stanton!—to be sure it was that boy. Quick, say that I shall be glad to see him up stairs."

"If you please, ma'am, his lordship asked for my master; and my master—he said, 'Yes, certainly.' He was quite smiling like, and cheerful. He said, 'Yes; certainly, Eastwood.' So, what was I to do? I showed his lordship in—and there they are now—as friendly—as friendly, if I may venture to make a comparison: His lordship," said Eastwood, prudently pausing before he committed himself to metaphor, "is, if I may make bold to say so, one of the nicest young gentlemen!"

Mary had risen hastily to interrupt this dangerous interview, which

alarmed her. She stood, paying no attention to Eastwood while the man was talking, feeling herself crowded and pressed on all hands by a multitude of thoughts. The hum of them was in her ears, like the sound of a throng of people. Should she go to the library, whatever her father might think of the interruption? Should she stop this meeting at all hazards? or should she let it go on, and that come which would? All was confusion around her, her heart beating loudly in her ears, and a hundred suggestions sounding through that stormy throbbing. But when Eastwood's commonplace voice, to which she had been paying no heed, stopped, Mary's thoughts came to a stop also. She grew faint, and the light seemed to vanish from her eyes.

The Squire had been sitting alone all day. He had seemed to all the servants (the most accurate of observers in such a case) more feeble than usual. His daughter, agitated and full of trouble about other things, had not remarked any change. But Eastwood had shaken his head down stairs, and had said that he did not like the looks of master. He had never been so gentle before. Whatever you said to him he smiled, which was not at all the Squire's way. And though he had a book before him, Eastwood had remarked that he did not read. He would cast his eyes upon his book when any one went in, but it was always the same page. Eastwood had made a great many pretences of business, in order to see how his master was, pretences which the Squire in his usual health would have put a stop to summarily, but which to-day he either did not observe at all, or received smilingly. In this way Eastwood had remarked a great many things which filled him with dismay; for he liked his old master, and the place suited him to perfection. He noticed the helpless sort of way in which Mr. Musgrave sat; his knees feebly leaning against each other, his fingers falling in a heap upon the arm of his chair, his eyelids

half covering his eyes. It was half the instinct of obedience, and half a benevolent desire to rouse his master, which made Eastwood introduce the visitor into the library without consulting Miss Musgrave. Judging by his own feelings, the man felt that nothing was so likely to stimulate and rouse up the Squire as a visit from a lord. There were not too many of them about; visitors of any kind, indeed, were not over plentiful at Penninghame; and a nice, cheerful, affable young lordship was a thing to do anybody good.

And Geoff went in, full of the mission he had taken in hand. It was a bold thing to do, after all he had heard of the inexorable old Squire who had shut his heart to his son, and would hear nothing of him, as everybody said. But it seemed to Geoff, in the rash generosity of his youth, that if he, who was the representative of the injured family were to interfere, the other must be convinced—must yield, at least, to reason, and consent to consider the subject. But he did not expect a very warm reception, and went in with a beating heart.

Mr. Musgrave had risen up to receive him; he had not failed in any of his faculties. He could still hear as well as he did twenty years before, and Lord Stanton's name was unusual enough to call his attention for the moment. He had raised himself from his chair, and stood leaning forward, supporting himself with both hands upon the writing-table before him. This had been a favourite attitude, when he had no occasion for support; but now the feeble hands leaned heavily with all the weight of his frame upon them. He said the name that had been announced to him with a wavering of suspicion in his tone, "Lord Stanton!" then pointed with a tremulous sweep of his hand to a seat, and himself dropped back into his chair. He was not the stern old chief whom Geoff expected to find, in arms against every suggestion of mercy, but a feeble old man, smiling

faintly, with a kind of veiled intelligence in his eyes. He murmured something about "an unusual pleasure," which Geoff could not make out.

"I have come to you, sir, about important business. I hope you will not think I am taking too much upon myself. I thought as I was—the chief person on one side, and you on the other, that you might allow me to speak?"

Geoff was as nervous as a child; his colour went and came. It awed him, he could scarcely tell why, to see the feebleness of the old figure, the dreary abstracted look in the old face.

"Surely—surely," said the old man. "Why should you not speak to me? Ours is perhaps a more distinguished race; but yours Mr. — I mean, my Lord Stanton, yours is—"

He half forgot what he was saying, getting slower and slower, and now stopped all at once. Then, after a moment, rousing himself, resumed, with a wave of his hand, "Surely—you must say—what you have to say."

This was worse for Geoff than if he had forbidden him altogether. What could he do to rouse interest in the old man's breast?

"I want to speak, sir," he said, faltering, "of your son."

"My son—ah! yes, Randolph is here. He is too old for me—too old—not like a son. What does it matter who is your father when it comes to that age?"

"It was not Randolph, sir. I did not know him; but it is your other son—your eldest son, I mean—John."

"Eh?" The old man roused up a little. "John—that was my little brother; we called him Johnny—a delightful boy. There is just such another in the house now, I believe. I think he is in the house."

"Oh, sir!" said Geoff, "I want to speak to you—to plead with you for some one who is not in the house—for your son John—John who has been so long away. You know—don't you

know whom I mean?—your eldest son, Mr. Musgrave—*John*, who left us, and left everything so many years ago.”

A wavering light came over the old man's face. He opened his eyes wide and gazed at Geoff, who, for his part, was too much troubled and alarmed to know what to do.

“Eh!” he said again, with a curious blank stare “my—what? Son? but not Randolph. No more about sons, they are a trouble and a sorrow. To tell the truth I am drowsy rather. I suppose—I have not been very well. Have you seen the little boy?”

“The little boy?—your grandson, sir?”

“Eh! you call him that! He is just such another as little Johnny, my little brother, who was eighteen months younger than I. You were saying something else, my—my—friend! But to tell the truth, this is all I am good for now. The elders would like to push us from the scene; but the little ones,” said the Squire, with a curious sudden break of laughter, which sounded full of tears, “the little ones—are fond of old people; that is all I am good for now—a-days—to play with the little boy—”

“Oh, sir!” said Geoff in his eagerness, “it is something very different that is expected of you. To save the little boy's father—your son—to bring him back with honour. It is honour not shame that he deserves. I who am a stranger, who am the brother of the man who was killed, I have come to entreat you to do John Musgrave justice. You know how he has been treated. You know, to our disgrace, not his, that there is still a sentence against him. It is John Musgrave—John Musgrave we ought to think of. Listen to me—oh, listen to me! your son—”

The old man rose to his feet, and stood wavering, gazing with troubled wide-open eyes, full of the dismal perplexity of an intelligence which feels itself giving way. “John Musgrave!” he said, with pale lips which trem-

bled and dropped apart; and a thrill and trembling came over his whole frame. Geoff sprang up and came towards him in alarm to support him, but the Squire waved him away with both his tremulous hands, and gave a bewildered look round him as if for some other prop. Suddenly he caught sight of the little carved oak cupboard against the wall. “Ah!” he said, with an exclamation of relief. This was what he wanted. He turned and made a feeble step towards it, opened it, and took from it the cordial which he used in great emergencies, and to which he turned vaguely in this utter overthrow of all his forces now. But then ensued a piteous spectacle; all his strength was not sufficient to pour it out. He made one or two despairing efforts, then put the bottle and glass down upon the table with a low cry, and sank back into his chair. He looked at Geoff with the very anguish of feebleness in his eyes. “Ah!” he faltered, “it is true—they are right. I am old—old—and good for nothing. Let them push me away, and take my place.” A few sobs, bitter and terrible, came with the words, and two or three tears dropped down the old man's gray-pale cheeks. The depth of mortal humiliation was in this last cry.

Geoff almost wept too in the profound pity of his generous young soul—it went to his very heart. “Let me help you,” he cried, pouring out the cordial with anxious care. It was all the Squire could do to put it to his lips. He laid one of his trembling hands upon Geoff's shoulder, as he gave back the glass, and whispered to him hoarsely, “Not Randolph,” he said; “don't let Randolph come. Bring me—do you know?—the little boy.”

“Yes, sir, yes,” cried Geoff; “I understand.”

The old Squire still held him with a hand which was heavy as lead upon his arm, “God bless you, my lad,” he said. He did not know who Geoff

was; but trusted to him as in utter prostration we trust to any hand held out to us. And a little temporary ease came with the potion. He smiled feebly once more, laid back his head, and closed his eyes. "My little Johnny!" he said; and his hands fell as Eastwood had described them, the fingers crumpled together all in a heap, upon the arms of his chair.

Geoff rushed out of the room with a beating heart, feeling himself all at once thrust into a position of importance in this unknown house. He had never seen death or its approach, and in his inexperience did not know how difficult it was to shuffle off the coils of mortality. He thought the old man was dying. Accordingly, he rushed up the slope to the old hall like a whirlwind, where Mary and the children were. "Come, come," he cried; "he is ill, very ill!" and snatching Nello's reluctant hand, ran back, dragging the child with him, who resisted with all his might. "Come, your grandfather wants you," cried Geoff. Mary followed, alarmed and wondering, and—scarcely knowing where she went in her agitation—found herself, behind the young man and the boy, at the door of that sacred library which the children had never entered, and where their very existence was ignored. Her father was lying back in his great chair, Eastwood, whom Geoff had hastily summoned, standing behind. The old man's heavy eyes were watching the door, his old limbs huddled together in the chair, like something inanimate thrown down in a heap, and lying as it fell. At sight of this awful figure, little Nello gave a loud cry of childish terror, and,

turning round, would have fled but for Geoff who stood behind him. At the sound of the child's voice, the old man roused himself feebly; he moved his arms, extending them in intention at least, and his lips with inaudible words. "Go to him, go to him!" cried Geoff in an imperative whisper. Little Nello was not without courage, though he was afraid. Finding the way of escape blocked up, he turned round again, stood irresolute for a moment, and then advanced with the strength of desperation. The old man, with a last effort, put out his arms, and drew the child between his knees. "My little Johnny," he said, with an only half-articulate outbreak of crying and strange laughter. Then his arms fell powerless; his head drooped on his breast. Nello broke out wildly into crying; but stood fascinated between the feeble knees.

Was he dead? Geoff thought so in his simplicity as he led the child away, and left Mary and the servants, whom he had summoned, in this death-chamber. He led Nello back to the hall, and sat down beside the children and talked to them in low tones. His mind was full of awe and solemn feeling; his own youth, and strength, and happiness seeming a kind of insult to the old and dying. He went back after a while very grave and humble to ask how it was, and what he could do. But the Squire was not dead. He was stricken by that silent *avant-courier* of the great king, who kills the mind before the body dies. It was "a stroke," Eastwood said, in all the awe, yet importance, of so tragic an event. He had seen it coming for weeks before, he said.

*To be continued.*



## PESSIMISM AND ITS ANTIDOTE.

THE consideration of general questions not admitting of definite answer, and always throwing us back on the consciousness of the extreme limitation of our knowledge, is not a profitable direction of mind, nor to be recommended as an exclusive study.

Still, occasionally, it may be wholesome, as it has confessedly a strange attraction for us, to journey to the confines of our little island of knowledge, and thence speculate a little on the trackless ocean of mystery to the navigation of which science and logic are alike inadequate. All true religion is founded on this consciousness of the infinite, of an ultimatum transcending our comprehension, but stimulating and exercising our faith.

The moral government of the world, the spiritual tendency, or indeed any dominant direction, of things, is not patent to the fleeting glance, does not reveal itself even to the most strenuous thought. The history of the world presents itself rather as a Jeremiad, as a bottomless chaos in which evil and good wrestle with each other for the mastery, and where evil generally boasts the vast majority of forces.

Savage countries lie thousands of years morally stagnating or decomposing; often physically starving, ground down under cruel despotisms and superstitions, reducing one another in perpetual warfares. The pages of the most favoured countries show long chapters of declension, and the moral influxes, like angels' visits, only few and far between. The cause of Brutus opens the way to Cæsarism and death. Spain shares in the tide of new life, but that life is zealously extinguished, and the nation settles down to decay. Cromwell and his Puritanism introduce Charles II. and licentiousness. The Pilgrim Fathers, Washing-

ton, and other great men, lay with solemnity and greatness of mind the foundations of the United States, and is its history hitherto a satisfactory result? Nation after nation, Egyptian, Persian, Jewish, Grecian, Roman, Arabian, and Celtic shoot into blossom in order to rot back into forgetfulness.

And if we take regard of the individual units that are always swarming by the millions into the world, what vast quantities get blasted out before they have well begun to cry, not to speak of the possible units frustrated of birth. And of those surviving the perils of the outset, how all get bruised and damaged sooner or later, till death comes and snuffs out the smoky tallow lights. People made a great fuss at the time about the late William King Thompson, of Brooklyn, New York, ship exploder, as if he had done something more than usually wicked, but now it is seen for the mere trifle it is. Say he exploded half a dozen shiploads of men, was there, out of the six human cargoes that flew successively all at once into ten thousand pieces, as much as *one* individual that properly speaking ever lived, or lived other than the most insignificant sensational existence? At every change of the temperature of the atmosphere from heat to cold are not many thousands of aerial midges summoned, on very short notice indeed, from their gay discursions to face the solemnities of eternity? Animal existence is cheap as dust, the earth and stones only requiring some little mixing and kneading in order to turn off endless batches of men and women.

Consider the tens of thousands always being born in our large cities, who by bad parentage, bad conception, foul air, foul food, and all manner of evil influences get at once summarily

stamped and sealed off to depravity and perdition. Think how in all our towns are houses where choice human cattle are kept, fed, and dressed, their soundness attested (on the Continent) by qualified officials; and how your choicest human cattle, rejoicing in their spiritual culture, throng into these shows to inspect and purchase. And in this enlightened age we know this is nature all the world over, and nature must be obeyed.

We are proud of the present age as the triumph of trade and mechanism. And we know the high genius and aim of trade. Trade thinks only on a good balance, and is proud of a good balance, be it got out of the follies and vices of men or in whatever way. Trade is thinning the country, crowding the towns, swelling dukes' incomes, fattening distillers and brewers, disfiguring and reducing the human physique, blighting the tenderness of relations between man and man, checking you off the values of the different sorts of intellect and inspiration. And, thanks to the extreme nicety of our mechanical arrangements, we are cut down into the most fractional existences. As if the *disjecta membra* left on a field of battle were made to spin into some sort of galvanic life. In the higher provinces, too, your intellectual men are distributed into departments and sub-departments as writers or speakers, while life in the walks of fashion is a game of consumption and show. And when on the part of busy men the day's arduous endeavours towards the continuance of sublime human life are accomplished, and leisure is left for reflection, then a glass of beer, a pipe, cards, coffee and cake, a game at billiards or whist, a novel from the circulating library, is illimitable scope for the spiritual faculties.

And if we turn to our highest spiritual institutions we see equal signs of prosperity. At all our famous universities droves of young men called "students" are invited to profane the holiest names and symbols

under the pretext of studying them, as if the first and foremost condition to intellectual activity or "study" were not a certain degree of spiritual faculty, of purification of the heart. The towns where they are collected for spiritual culture they defile more scandalously than any other class which makes no pretensions to spiritual culture.

Even if we single, out of the whole range of human history, the few men of genius whom we are constrained to regard as the eminently favoured and endowed of our race, we find what a broken career has been allotted to the most of them. Have not many of them, possessing courage to inspire, intelligence to enlighten, sensibility to refine the world, sickened under the languor of neglect or got embittered at the endless contradictions and misrepresentations of their fellows, dying at last as unfortunate men, unhappy to themselves, unbeneficial to their contemporaries? What an evil is the not unfrequent depravity of genius, and which under happier circumstances might have been a great salutary influence instead! Might not the tremendous forces of Swift, for example, have been turned to better account than left to explode in shocks of half-diabolic hate in earlier days, and in madness at the end? Think of the generous human heart, brave will, and clear head of Burns, a man of quite transcendent powers, yet fain to slink past on the shady side of the street, left to bleed so wretchedly to death in the midsummer of his days. Contemplate the great intellect and great heart of Lessing, a man of thrice excellent mother-wit and effectiveness, disposing with a lordly air of the whole literature of Europe, awakening with his clarion voice his slumbering nation to new intellectual conquests, yet himself imprisoned for so many of his best years in the stifling library dust of Wolfenbüttel, isolated there in the midst of an unhealthy swamp; the world such a dish of skimmed milk as to be incapable of any sense of honour.

Was not Lessing's child a boy of remarkable sense, who no sooner came into the world than, seeing his mistake, made out of it double quick? Is it not probable that many brave souls, braver and better perhaps than any known to fame, have gone down to silence unregarded, the world's stupidity being more than a match for the gods themselves? Think of good Edgar in *King Lear*, and had he been left to die a maniac, would that, think you, have been untrue to fact?

Even the one or two to whom fate has been most propitious, a Shakspeare, a Goethe, have not they too suffered from the bruises or flattery of fortune, fallen at any rate far short of the fullness and balance a happier age and education might have conducted them to?

People are indeed fond of raising monuments and holding centenaries (to the so-called honour!) of great men, but do you think there is any significance at the bottom of it? Very little indeed. The fathers kill the prophets, and the sons garnish their sepulchres.

In the face of these facts and considerations how disgusting to hear the universal cant about "public opinion." The shoemaker's opinion may indeed have some value on the matter of boots, the tailor's on that of clothes; but what opinion can the masses, all absorbed in the question of simple existence, have about government and education and religion? At best they are capable of a total heart-belief in *names*, of dying as martyrs for *names*. Dean Stanley admits that most of the noble martyrdoms have been in attestation of peculiar combinations of letters of the alphabet. See the intellect and heart of Scotland wrangling, down into the latter end of the nineteenth century (and into how many later centuries!) as to whether little children at school shall learn how to define effectual calling and distinguish between justification, adoption, and sanctification!

And all men shall be immortal? Each despicable unit must needs be

an immortal and independent soul? Came from God? And God sends by special appointment such swarms of immortal souls, often in such questionable ways into the world? And if you are really eternal the *one way, before*, you must also be so the other way, *behind*? What, then, of your being a thousand years ago? And you do seem to carry the air of eternity about you, sleeping and digesting and pottering about nothing as you do! Is not each individual man, according to Darwin and Haeckel, but the temporary inheritor and transmitter of the qualities of his ancestors, modified by the impressions received during his own tenure of life from intercourse with people, reading, &c.? And how can the self same life be held at one and the same time by each individual successive link in an endless chain, seeing the life devolves but in succession, and that each link in the chain sparkles into existence and luminousness only during the short term of actual possession?

It is no use arguing that men are left to their own free wills, and have themselves to blame for their fates, when the whole complaint is simply that men have no free wills to be left to, but are total slaves. And yet not a poor devil desecrating the earth but, under very possible circumstances, through a kinder providence and better influences, might have been saved in the first place from being born a devil. Where, then, is the moral government of the world, the ideal tendency of things, the high and lofty destinies, and all that? Schopenhauer and Bahnsen, earnest thinkers, arrive, after exhaustive examination and mature deliberation, at the conclusion, that the world is not the best but the worst conceivable, the best possible issue for its annihilation, man's greatest misfortune birth, his greatest happiness death.

*And yet the everlasting impossibility of accepting this as a final statement proves unquestionably its partiality—*

proves there must be quite a different and broader verdict. *Dum spiro spero*; respiration is aspiration. Life is hope, is struggle upwards and onwards. Healthy and robust life can set no final goal to its endeavours and hopes, but carries deep in its bosom the promise of quite an infinity of inheritance—dim and unconscious perhaps, yet latently warm and unquestioning.

Despair is death, declension from once recognised higher ideas is degeneration, violation of principles of honour and justice once recognised is inevitable injury. In the active furtherance of spiritual or universal ends alone has man solid and complete satisfaction. What is the meaning of the universal Jeremiad from the beginning of time till now but "the fall," the declension from the necessary justice and goodness? Down to the last stage of depravity the man is never at home in his depravity. It is always *depravity*, and not native badness. The man's unsightliness, alienation from himself and his fellows, inward sense of bankruptcy and ruin, is an eloquent, pathetic sermon in behalf of the True. Injustice, selfishness, disavowal of obligations, seizure of others' property, never enriched or profited a man, but has always been so much inward contraction, induration, plethora, delirium—always so much disease involving so much pain, demanding so much expiation.

The subordination of self in the pious recognition of the eternal laws (= religion) and the adequate willing execution of the same (= art); that alone is life, and a man is more or less according to the measure of his possession of this life. In the name of God, which is our highest expression of the world, is recognised something higher than our utmost sense of the just, good and beautiful. If, then, our hearts go out in fervent irrepressible longings of love towards the great men who have met on this planet the most unhand-some reception, if we demand that the heavy debt of love and esteem which was due to Lessing, for example, but

never paid, be at last made good to him, that this excellent spirit, which out of a full heart would radiate to the quickening and enlightening of his country and Europe, do not strike his beams into emptiness, but that he himself also be gladdened by the warm reflection of his own light; is there, are we to suppose, nothing in the heart of things, nothing in the primal intellect and heart corresponding to this unshunnable demand on the part of our remote individual consciousness? Shall the mother-sun be less warm than a reflex ray of itself? If, again, our hearts, though so poor and insensible, can yet break in salt sorrow over the confused helpless misery of the masses, is the prayer that bursts involuntarily from them not in accord with the heart of God Himself? Is it a foolish and false impulse which nature stirs in the heart of the mother when she recognises a quite infinite value in the poor helpless chick newly-born to her? When Jesus Christ appeared as a symbol of love and mercy in this world, preaching the prodigal son, and proclaiming the God of this world to be a God of righteousness and compassion, could the hearts of His hearers remain insensible to the manifestation and the sermon? Have not the words been caught up as the truest gospel of the highest God? And in Jesus Christ, who felt an unspeakable interest even in the outcasts of society, and whose attitude towards the morally wrecked man, in whom desires and appetites had devoured all the handsome capital and prospects and possibilities in life, was *not* the side sniff of cold disdain, but condemnation into everlasting fire or an infinite yearning of compassion—in this appearance of Jesus Christ on earth have not men been constrained worshipfully to recognise the truest incarnation of God? Religion which sinks in us all personal regards, which would bring us into immediate communion with the Supreme, is ever a consciousness of inexhaustible resources—is more than

a counterpoise for all the ills of life, and all the black facts which history can adduce—is a power which can dwarf all history, all the hitherto actual, into the insignificance of a mere prelude, and not an essential act in the drama of life itself.

Meanwhile, over and above this general reflection, which, if needed, can always serve as our last impregnable resource, it is possible to predicate particularly some of the advantages, and even the absolute necessity, of the confusion and misery everywhere attaching to reality.

This confused world of good and evil is the right arena and training school for battle, enterprise, patience—for all the active and indeed also all the passive virtues. The baseness, stupidity, folly, injustice, suffering and wreck this world everywhere presents are always a splendid challenge to strength, diligence, endurance, faith, wisdom—to all sublime and manly qualities. Sloth, indolence, sweet dreaminess and credulity have a hard time of it here—meet everyday with the shrewdest rubs and tosses till they are either forced into wakefulness or gored into death. A long-living and prosperous nation must plough the soil, must sail the sea, must live much out of doors, must ever be prepared to defend its own against the whole surrounding world. And the artist or man of letters must not ensconce himself too much in his cosy study, but lay himself open to the shock of opposition and the misconstruction of his fellows, must not shrink from the experience of unkindly facts to try his nerve and test his digestion. Only to the man who lives industriously, moderately, honestly, truthfully, and piously, does God vouchsafe higher disclosures; and to the man who will eat the bread that has been by the labour of other hands procured for him without paying an equivalent, the kingdom of heaven is for ever shut.

The personal pain, languishment, and embitteredness do not spoil for

the brave man his appreciation of life, but by persistent faith and well-doing he subdues and converts contrarieties into furtherances. Socrates and Paul and Cromwell and Milton did not break their hearts or give up the fight. Lessing, after all the languor and sickness of Wolfenbüttel, refused to die, though he bore in his heart the deadly ravages of fate, till he had first presented to his ungrateful country his large-hearted offering of *Nathan der Weise*. Nor was he egoistically looking forward to a world of happiness beyond the grave, as compensation for his sufferings, as reward for his magnanimous services.

“He heeded not reviling tones,  
Nor sold his heart to idle moans,  
Tho’ cursed and scorned, and bruised with  
stones.”

Think what sort of world it would be without the pain and persecution. When in our church pews our ears are tickled with the sweet eloquence about heaven, where there will be no tragedy, no pain, no tears, no trial of temper, no tempers, no passions, no black, all white, only white, everlasting singing, and so on, does not every masculine heart feel the most melancholy misgivings about the concern? would he not willingly sell out on that policy even at a liberal discount, could he but invest with the realised capital in this troublous yet withal interesting plane?!

The truth is, the mixture and antithesis is the appetising quality in the fare of life. The dangers, misunderstandings, jealousies, errors, and seductions on the one hand; on the other hand the joy in healthy relations to the sensuous world, and in the æsthetic contemplation of it, the sense of the ludicrous and ridiculous evermore tickled by the wonderful conjunctions of the sublime and vulgar in human affairs, the feeling of heaven in true relations to our fellow-men and women, in work accomplished and duty performed, the highest bliss of all in the recognition of, and nearer



and nearer identification with, the Supreme Spirit; the sense, in short, of a hell on the one hand to be shunned, and a heaven on the other to be enjoyed—whoever vividly realises all this will not underrate life on this planet, but infinitely prize it.

Yes, this earth is dear to mortal men, not merely in spite of its tears and crosses, but also on account of them. The bitterest experiences we pass through need but to drift to the due distance in the past, and they assume a wonderfully interesting guise. Strangely, tenderly affecting in the retrospect are our riotous "Hal" days, our sighing Venus and Adonis fit, our sultry Werther fever, our sweet and bitter Faust period, and all the other dear illusions which beset us on our devious path.

For indeed we prize life not by the sum of our possessions, but only by the rate and steadiness of our growth. "Not the possession," says Lessing, "or fancied possession of the truth, but the endeavour after it determines a man's value. If God held in His right hand the sum total of truth, and in His left the ever-inextinguishable desire after truth, though linked with the condition of everlastingly wandering in error, and called to me, *Choose*, I should humbly close with the left and answer, 'Father, give me this; the truth pure and simple is for Thee alone.'"

But if we will have cleared to ourselves at the highest court what it imparts to error, crime, and tragedy their powerful attraction, so that they are indispensable to high poetry and music and art, we shall find it is only because they constitute a dark background to heighten the play of the lightnings, to glorify the splendour of the sun. The trial and sorrow and humiliation serve to bring out in distincter outline the faith and serenity and triumph which, as in St. Paul, are more than a match for all the powers of darkness. Our conviction of the dominance and necessity of moral law is so deeply grounded, that the storm

and earthquake threatening its upheaval only summon into livelier consciousness our inexpugnable confidence. Let the heavens fall. Though the earth be removed, God is our refuge.

It is the conscious or unconscious conviction of every sound man that truth is better and more beautiful than any delusion, that a man's well-being is the measure of his conformity to truth. Does a man find his hitherto solid philosophy impugned, his most holy religion out of joint with new emerging facts, he will not shut his ears to the severe reason. Does science come and knock from under his feet the ground of immortality on which he had rested, it may help only to startle him out of his egoism—startle him on to some firmer footing. He must feel the immortality in the present, and not postpone it to the future. Only he who has eternal life in him (= intellectual recognition of, and hearty identification with, eternal law) is eternal. If Darwinism is true, and a man's spiritual supremacy is also true, the two facts will square with each other. For mind and nature are the type and impression, in perfect correspondence to each other. The harshest exception is, when properly understood, no exception but a confirmation of the beautiful law. Depth and wholeness of vision will always be song and piety, be Dante and Shakspeare, never scepticism and mockery. The reconciliation of the spirit with fate and nature is a grace which rests sweetly and unconsciously in the heart of simple goodness, but is also the crowning grace of the boldest intellect which has pierced deep enough. Plato, Shakspeare, Milton, Newton, Kant, Goethe, and Schiller are reverent worshippers, and walk in the sanctuary above arm in arm with Christ and the apostles. We see in the *Nathan der Weise* how the brave Lessing received before death in fullest measure the gift of reconciliation.

And out of the perplexities and corruptions and misunderstandings of human affairs we have in nature,

which ever over-canopies and surrounds us, a retreat into the beautiful, where we can evermore refresh our sense and conviction of the holy. The sun, stars, woods, grasses, shells, birds, and wild creatures are not corrupt, or at least do not suggest to man, when he contemplates them as a whole (æsthetically and not scientifically)—do not suggest images of corruption; but the poor besotted wretch beholds a perfect splendour in the sun, the prey of ruinous appetites looks into an eye of innocence in the flowers, the bankrupt gazes around and above him, and wonders why in a royal palace he should be a blot and disgrace.

As soon as the man rises above his desires, and throws the roots of his being beyond the narrow confines of his egoism into the spiritual realm, where his own individual self sinks in other individuals, where other individuals become as much his proper interest as himself, then the soul becomes one with the universal soul, and perfect reconciliation is enjoyed. The man's past pains are healed, his very sins and sorrows yield themselves to him as experience and instruction and romance.

The devil himself is subdued into good. Job's latter days are more beautiful than his early days. Through his sorrows and errors, Faust at last attains to a wider and holier life. The attraction to Gretchen, notwithstanding the sensuous illusions, has, in the heart of it, a soul of love and

sacredness, and through the deep welter of sin and suffering is purified at last into sanctity. Do you think Faust in the end would annihilate his experience of Gretchen if it were possible? No, the earth and heaven are dearer because of her. Gretchen is universalised, and the universal is Gretchenised, the world is all a sacred, pathetic Gretchen.

That an unhappy life may be happier than a happy one is indeed a paradox, but is meant in earnest. A tragedy is more delightful than a comedy. Or a comedy is better for a mixture, and strong mixture, of tragedy, so the tragedy only get digested in the end. Black is necessary not only to the relief, but even to the very composition of white. I should not choose a life of uninterrupted pleasure, were the world to engage its utmost to secure it me. The lightning is born of the darkness, and the battle, joy and splendour of life are to be measured by the amount of opposition overcome.

"They say best men are moulded out of faults,  
And, for the most, become much more the better  
For being a little bad."

Let us with assured hearts trust the Cause of all, who has created the good and the evil, but has, we believe, made the evil to be ultimately subservient to the good.

CHARLES NISBET.

## THE DECLINE OF PARTY GOVERNMENT.

THE late Presidential Election appears likely, in its results, to mark an epoch not only in the political history of the United States, but in that of all constitutional countries. In the person of the new President the American government has come out of party and is trying to be the government of the whole nation. Sir Robert Peel tried the same thing in England, though in his case the "splendid perfidy" to party was less marked than in the case of Governor Hayes, because the repeal of the Corn Laws was not more essential to the interest of the country, which it rescued from dearth, than it was to that of the Conservative party, which it rescued from hopeless opposition to the nation and from utter political ruin. Party found a dagger with which to stab Sir Robert Peel. President Hayes has shown himself a strong man, but the greatest trials of his strength are still to come. When Congress meets he will have to contend both with the resentment of the regular managers of his own party and with the hostility of the thorough-going Democrats, who will see their opportunity in the breach between the President and the party which raised him to power, as the Whigs in 1846 saw their opportunity in the breach between Sir Robert Peel and the Protectionist section of his followers. Supposing, however, that President Hayes, like Peel, should fail, his attempt, like that of Peel, will have a significance which no momentary failure can annul. It announces the decline of the party system, and the advent, not immediate perhaps, but still certain, of national government.

It is curious with what implicit faith we have all reposed upon party, as the normal, permanent and only possible mode of carrying on a free constitution, disregarding not only the objections which reason

obviously suggests to the system and the general evidences of its bad effects on politics and political character, but the facts which showed plainly enough that its foundations were giving way, and that if this was the only basis of government, government was likely to be soon left without a basis.

Burke, in his *Thoughts on the Cause of the Present Discontent*, has given at once his definition and his defence of party:—

"Party is a body of men united, for promoting by their joint endeavours the national interest upon some particular principle in which they are all agreed. For my part, I find it impossible to conceive that any one believes in his own politics or thinks them to be of any weight who refuses to adopt the means of having them reduced into practice. It is the business of the speculative philosopher to mark the proper ends of government. It is the business of the politician, who is the philosopher in action, to find out proper means towards those ends, and to employ these with effect. Therefore every honourable connection will avow it as their first purpose to pursue every just method to put the men who hold their opinions into such a condition as may enable them to carry their common plans into execution with all the power and authority of the State. As this power is attached to certain situations, it is their duty to contend for these situations. Without a proscription of others they are bound to give to their own party the preference in all things; and by no means, for private considerations, to accept any offer of power in which the whole body is not included; nor to suffer themselves to be led or to be controlled or to be overbalanced, in office or in council, by those who contradict the very fundamental principles on

which their party is formed, and even those upon which every fair connexion must stand. Such a generous contention for power, on such manly and honourable maxims, will easily be distinguished from the mean and interested struggle for place and emolument. The very style of such persons will serve to discriminate them from those numberless impostors who have deluded the ignorant with professions incompatible with human practice, and have afterwards incensed them by practices below the level of vulgar rectitude."

To form a rational and moral basis for party, to prevent party from sinking into faction, the party leader from becoming an "impostor," and the "generous contention for power" from degenerating into a "mean and interested struggle for place and emolument," there must be, as Burke says, a particular principle on which the members of the connexion are agreed in desiring that government should be carried on. Failing such a principle, party, and the golden haze with which Burke, according to his manner, has surrounded it, vanish, and leave a faction or a void.

The principle must not be a moral principle, because this would imply an organised opposition to morality on the other side, and the permanent existence of an immoral party; two parties always in active existence being plainly essential to the working of the system. You cannot, for example, have a party of purity, because this would imply, as its correlative and complement, a party of corruption, and it would be a grotesque arrangement to devote half your citizens permanently to the service and advocacy of corruption in order to maintain the machinery of your government.

The principle must be one of expediency. Parties, in other words, must be divided by some question of policy, about which honest men may differ. And it must be a question of sufficient magnitude to transcend in importance all other questions; of sufficient importance to warrant a man

of sense and a good citizen in surrendering for its sake his private judgment on all other political subjects to the guidance of the party leader and the exigencies of the party struggle, and in doing his utmost to exclude from the legislature and the public service all men, however honest, however able, however useful in general respects to the country, who do not agree with him on the vital point. We need not use the invidious term *proscription*, the thing will be the same.

Now it is manifest, in the first place, that the occurrence of such questions is exceptional, and not normal; they can seldom arise in fact except with reference to some organic change in the constitution, such as the transfer of supreme power from the Crown to Parliament, or the change in the character of Parliament itself, embodied in the English Reform Bill of 1832. American slavery was an issue of a different kind and of still more transcendent importance; but it was one lying quite beyond the pale of ordinary politics. In normal times the occupations of legislatures and governments will be matters of current administration, not one of which is likely to form an issue of sufficient importance to swallow up all the rest and form a rational ground for the division of the nation into two organized parties struggling each to place its leaders in exclusive possession of the powers of the state.

In the second place, questions of expediency, however important, do not last for ever; in one way or other they are settled and disappear from the political scene. Slavery dies and is buried. Parliamentary Reform is carried out with all its corollaries, and becomes a thing of the past. What is to follow? Another question of sufficient importance to warrant a division of the nation into parties must be found. But suppose no such question exists, are we to manufacture one? That is the work to which the wire-pullers devote themselves in democracies governed by party, but the results seem hardly to correspond to our notion

of the adamantine basis on which the political edifice is to rest for ever.

Some astronomers say that the moon once had an atmosphere, but that she has exhausted it, and that she shows us what our planet will be when, in the course of ages, its atmosphere also shall have been exhausted. The Colonies, in this matter of party government, may furnish an indication of the same kind to the mother country. In Canada, for example, while New World society was struggling to repel the intrusive elements of the old *régime* forced upon it by the Imperial country, and to extort self-government, the parties, though not altogether edifying in their behaviour or salutary in their influence upon popular character, were at least formed upon real lines. But the struggle ended with the abolition of the State Church and the secularization of the Clergy Reserves. Since that time there has been no real dividing line between the parties; they have ceased to be truly directed to public objects of any kind; their very names have become unintelligible. Politics under such a party system must inevitably sink at last into an "interested contest for place and emolument" carried on by "impostors who delude the ignorant with professions incompatible with human practice, and afterwards incense them by practices below the level of vulgar rectitude." It is needless to say what effects an incessant war of intrigue, calumny and corruption carried on by such party leaders, with the aid of the sort of journalists who are willing to take their pay, must produce on the political character of a community, however naturally good, and well adapted for self-government. Nobody is to blame. The blame rests entirely on the system. Lord Elgin found fault with Canadian parties for being formed with reference to petty objects, not to great questions. It is singular that so acute a man should not have asked himself where the great questions were to be found. Were they to be manufactured or imported?

Nothing is more curious than the ingenuity with which new reasons are invented for old institutions when the original reasons have ceased to exist. The advocates of the party system in countries destitute of party questions, at a loss for rational grounds of defence, take a desperate dive into psychology, and affirm that all men are by natural tendency either Conservatives or Liberals, so that the division of every community into two parties is not merely a practical exigency of politics but a general law of humanity. In that case nature must have been peculiarly kind to certain politicians who are furnished with a double set of tendencies enabling them to appear in both the parties at different periods of their career. It is hardly necessary to prove that the varieties of natural temperament are numberless, and are still further diversified by the influences of position, age and fortune; and that to divide any nation into two organized parties according to their temperaments would be an undertaking far transcending in absurdity all the fancies of Laputa. Yet such philosophy probably helps to cast a halo over a contest of "impostors," the character and objects of which could not otherwise escape the most "vulgar" eye.

We have an example of the tendencies of the system in the Australian colonies if Australian journals may be believed. Whatever land questions, or other questions of an organic kind or of permanent importance there were, having been settled, and no basis for parties left, party government it seems in those countries is weltering in cabal, senseless faction fighting and all the concomitant evils. The worst arts and the worst men inevitably acquire an increasing ascendancy in public life. Changes of ministry, brought about for the most part by mere personal intrigue, are of constant occurrence. Government is almost as unstable as in Mexico, and though the mode in which the revolutions are effected is less violent, they are perhaps not much less injurious to the political character of the people or less likely to produce a



complete disintegration of authority in the end.

Imitation of England has led the political world a strange dance. The Chinese shipwrights when desired to build a vessel in place of one which had been disabled by dryrot, produced an exact copy, dryrot and all. Montesquieu fancied that the grand secret of English liberty lay in the separation of the executive and the judicial power from the legislative. With their union in the same hands liberty would end. This theory found general acceptance; yet at the very time when Montesquieu made this profound observation, the legislature had in fact got into its hands the executive, which it appointed by the vote of its majority, and the judiciary, which was appointed by the executive. But the effect of the notion is visible in the provisions of the American Constitution; and the consequence is an occasional deadlock, arising from a conflict between the legislature and the executive, as in the case of President Johnson, who was impeached to force him into harmony with Congress. Again, the House of Lords has been taken for a Senate, and the check imposed by its mature and deliberate wisdom on the rashness of the more popular House has been supposed to be the grand safeguard of British legislation. The House of Lords is not a Senate, nor a Second Chamber, in the sense in which the term is practically employed by the architects of new constitutions. It is an estate of the realm: it is a privileged order having an interest of its own separate from that of the nation at large, and defending its own interests, which are necessarily those of privilege, and therefore of reaction, by resisting every measure of political change as long as it is safe to do so. Of its revising precipitate legislation in an impartial sense no instance can be found. But other nations try to reproduce it in the form of a Second Chamber, and they find, one after another, that compose your Second Chamber and appoint its members as

you will, the result is either a nullity or a collision between the two Houses, in which the more popular House will probably prevail.

In the same way it has been assumed that the English system of party and of cabinets, which are committees of party, is the vital principle of constitutional government. But party in England has been the instrument, probably the indispensable instrument, of a chronic revolution. By the action of the party which in its successive phases has borne the names of Puritan, Whig, and Liberal, the Tudor autocracy has been reduced to a limited, or rather a faineant, monarchy, and the Tory oligarchy, once entrenched in the rotten boroughs, has been replaced by a House of Commons elected on a more popular basis; supreme power, in other words, has been gradually transferred from the Crown and the aristocracy to the representatives of the people. All this time there has been a real ground of division and a question of importance supreme enough to warrant allegiance to a party. But the process is now nearly complete. Other questions, of which the name Radical is the symbol, will probably emerge, and may again furnish grounds for the action of party. As it is, the lines between the aristocratic and democratic parties remain, though their outline is confused and the democratic party is paralysed for the time by the Conservative reaction, caused mainly by a vast influx of wealth. But we have an inkling at all events in the present state of things, even in England, of the time when the materials for party will be finally exhausted, and when we shall be obliged perforce to look out for some other mode of working constitutional government. Bayonets have their uses, but you cannot sit on them. Party has its use as the organ of a pacific revolution; but it will not supply the permanent basis of a national government.

Even in the course of the revolution, effected by means of party in England,

as often as the movement has been temporarily suspended by accident or lassitude, the weakness of the system has appeared. Between the fall of Jacobitism and the advent of the French Revolution, when there was no great party question on foot, but the offices of state were still put up as the prizes of success in the struggle of parliamentary factions, you had half a century of chaotic intrigue and corruption, broken only by the short dictatorship of Chatham, whose own conduct, in the cabals which drove Walpole into the war with Spain, was an example if not of place-hunting, of place-storming, of the most flagrant kind. The boasted efficiency of party, as a detector and exposé of abuses, was then proved to be little sustained by facts: it was seen, neither for the first nor for the last time, that two factions, whatever their mutual hatred, may virtually combine to preserve a privilege of plundering the community, which each hopes to exercise in its turn.

Not only is the usefulness of party as a political instrument closely connected with the peculiar circumstances of English history; it is closely connected also with the peculiar circumstances of an age of unscientific politics, of combinations formed upon class interests, of little independence of mind, feeble reasonings and strong passions. With the advance of political knowledge, of independent thought, and it must be added of public morality, allegiance to party grows less possible, party discipline loses its hold, the cohesion of party is broken up and refuses to be restored. The better a party is in point of intelligence, individual sense of responsibility, individual regard for the public good, the less submissive to the whip, and therefore the weaker it becomes; a singular result of the only perfect system. What do we see in England now? On one side is a party weak to the verge of impotence, unable to act together even for one evening, to all appearances hopelessly excluded from power; and this because it is a party

of opinion, of individual intelligence, of individual conscience, of individual desire to improve the condition of the people. On the other side is a party overwhelmingly strong, acting under perfect discipline and likely to be for an indefinite time master of the state; and this because it is a party of interest, which always unites while opinion inevitably divides.

Efforts are made on the Liberal side to compensate the weakness of mental independence as a basis of party union by increased stringency of organization. But these only bring more clearly to light the incompatibility of mental independence with the party system. In a recent number of this magazine we published a very graphic and interesting account of the political machinery used by the Liberal managers at Birmingham. We are not in a humour to quarrel with anything which in the present dearth of ability, especially of rising ability in the House of Commons has helped to secure the election of Mr. Chamberlain. Nor do we overlook the fact that the spontaneous organization on the side of the Tories, in the shape of social connections and the tyrannical pressure they exert, is such that it can only be counterbalanced by artificial organization carried to a high pitch on the other side. But we must say that the use of such machinery does seem to involve a terrible sacrifice of those very habits of mental independence which it is the pride of Liberalism to promote. The absolute necessity of defending progress and the interests of the community at large against the despotism of a class alone reconciles us in any measure to the system. In the United States the masters of the party machines have everywhere taken the representation out of the hands of the people; you are practically not at liberty to vote for anybody but their nominees; and the Republican horse, to vanquish the Democratic stag, becomes absolutely the slave of its rider.

In the United States the opinion of the best judges, so far as we can gather

it, is that the disorganization of the parties is increasing and is likely to increase. Nor is it possible to name any issues on which new parties can be formed. There is no question which, even supposing it to be of sufficient importance, would at all coincide with the existing lines; and a complete reconstruction of parties with a new arrangement of the leaders and wire-pullers, irrespective of all personal connections, would be practically out of the question. Two alternatives will present themselves to the people: either a new mode of working constitutional government and maintaining the proper check on the executive must be found, or the President must be allowed to become something very like an elective dictator for a term of years.

The practice of setting up the offices of the executive as the prize of victory in a legislative contest carried on by the agency of party, appears to be injurious alike to legislation and to executive government. It is injurious to legislation, because public men are constantly tempted to deal with legislative questions in the interest of their own ambition, for the purpose of paving their way to office, or strengthening their position there, not with a view to the proper objects of legislation; whence a number of unnecessary, premature and dishonest measures. All the members of the Conservative party, before 1867, had recorded their opinions against a large extension of the franchise as tending to place political power in ignorant and irresponsible hands. They, then, to keep their party in office, and at the bidding of leaders who they knew had no other motive, themselves extended the franchise to the most ignorant and irresponsible part of the population, the populace of the towns. The practice is injurious to executive government because it excludes or ejects from office the ablest and most trusted administrators on account of opinions respecting legislative questions which in no way affect administration. It wrongly unites, in short, two political functions which

are perfectly distinct and which mutually suffer by being bound up with each other.

It is needless to dilate upon the relations of party, its machinery, its strategy, the press which serves it and expresses its passions, to public morality and the general interests of the state; the facts are always before our eyes. But experience of a colony or of some new country is needed to make one thoroughly sensible of the effects of this warfare upon the political character of the people, and of the extent to which it threatens to sap the very foundations of patriotism and of respect for lawful authority in their minds.

It is supposed that the hostile vigilance of party is the great safeguard against political corruption, and one which, if removed, it would be impossible to replace. But there are some countries at least in which the indiscriminate slander in which party constantly deals forms really a cloak of darkness for all corruption rather than a lantern for the detection of any; while its effect on the character of public men is to produce general lowness of tone and brazen indifference to accusations of every kind. The experiment has not yet been tried of legislating definitely against the corrupt use of legislative or executive power, which is a perfectly tangible crime (at least it is difficult to see why the sale of a vote in a legislative assembly, or of a government contract, is not as tangible a crime as the fraudulent breach of an ordinary trust) and of instituting a tribunal for the trial of offenders. And therefore we are still at liberty, at all events, to entertain the belief that the sight of a single politician suffering a felon's doom by the impartial and righteous judgment of a court of law for the corrupt betrayal of his public trust, would have a more salutary effect than the interested and reckless denunciations of all the party orators and journalists in the world.

It is easy to see why, up to this time, party has been the law of

politics; but it is not easy to see why, for the future, and as reason extends its sway over the political sphere and limits the reign of passion, party should be the law of politics more than of any other subject. Party, we mean, organized and permanent; such as the parties of the Guelfs and Ghibelins, of the Blacks and Whites, of the Caravats and Shanavests. On social and philanthropic questions, on questions and in movements of all kinds people combine for a particular object, and the object having been gained they fall back into their ordinary associations. Why should they not do the same in politics, supposing politics to be a matter not of passion and ambition, but of reason and of the public good? This is the answer to the argument on the side of party that nothing can be carried without combination. It can hardly be necessary to meet the argument that political truth can only be hammered out by the constant collision of parties. With regard to all other subjects it is supposed that while free discussion is conducive to the discovery of the truth, party feeling and subserviency to party are most adverse to it. But people tacitly assume that they can have party without party feeling and the evils to which every one, when the question is distinctly proposed to him, admits that party feeling must lead.

Nor again need we dwell long on the argument that party is necessary in order to keep up an interest in human affairs. Human affairs, according to all present appearances, are likely to be interesting enough to keep the mind of man alive and to give birth to abundance of controversy (if that is the thing desired) for generations to come without our forming artificial parties for the purpose of enabling ambitious men to obtain exclusive possession of the power of the state.

Party is no doubt indispensable to selfish interests, which by taking advantage of the balance of factions are enabled, to an almost indefinite extent, to compass their special objects at the

expense of the community. It is indispensable to political sharpers who, without legislative powers or any sort of ability or inclination to serve the public in any honourable way, find subsistence in an element of passion and intrigue. To whom or to what else it is indispensable, no one has yet been able definitely to say.

Burke himself, the great apologist of party, was the great apostate from it. He called his apostasy fidelity to the Old Whigs; but the Old Whigs were in their graves, and the rhetorical turn given by him to his secession did not alter the fact. In the case of his defence of party, as in many other cases, his fervid and unbridled imagination has erected a particular expedient, the necessity of a special occasion, into a universal and everlasting law. Before him, another man had shaken off party trammels apparently from the conviction of their radical inconsistency with the public interest. The life of Lord Shelburne is in this special respect a most important, as well as in all respects a most interesting, addition to political biography, and we shall see as it proceeds whether Shelburne is entitled to the credit of having tried to be a national statesman.

Our proposition, however, is this—that let party, as a system of government be good or evil, the materials for parties are nearly exhausted in the British colonies, and probably in the United States: that they are temporarily exhausted, and may one day be entirely exhausted, in England: while in other countries (in France and Germany for instance,) the sections and subsections of opinion are too numerous and the lines between them are too wavering to admit of the clear division into two parties absolutely essential to the working of the system, which, when there are three or four parties instead of two, becomes a quicksand of intrigue on which no government can be founded. Under these circumstances it is necessary, whether we will or not, to look out for some other foundation for constitu-

tional government. The penalty of not doing so will be either confusion or the domination of some selfish and, because it is selfish, compact and all-powerful interest.

To determine what that foundation is to be, is probably a task reserved for better heads than ours. But perhaps the Swiss constitution, in its general principles, may point the way. It suggests the regular election of the executive council by the legislature in place of a struggle of parties to determine which side of the house shall have the privilege of distributing the prizes among its leaders. The proper relations between the legislature and the executive might be preserved by a proper rotation of elections, with any such provisions as seemed expedient in the way of cumulative voting. The tenure of office would of course be limited; whether to the duration of the parliament (which is the Swiss system) or to a term of years would be a question of detail, but the advantage of a continuous executive would be in favour of the latter plan. It does not seem that with this limitation the power of the members of the executive council would be too great, or that their responsibility would be unduly diminished; excess of authority, provided it be constituted in the interest of the whole nation and accountable to the nation in case of an abuse of power, is not the political danger which at present we have most reason to dread. Nor does it seem that, with, say, three elections occurring each year, the executive council could get much out of harmony with the legislature, or fail pretty adequately to represent the prevailing sentiment of the legislature for the time being. But the executive under such a system would do its own work, and leave the legislature free to do the work of legislation. The special initiation of the Minister of Finance in financial matters would be preserved by the same sense of an obvious necessity which has established it. In the performance of purely administrative duties, all the members of the council

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might without difficulty agree, and their co-operation in their proper work might be perfect, notwithstanding possible differences of opinion about matters of legislation. Why should not a good Chancellor of the Exchequer act in harmony with a good Home Secretary notwithstanding a difference of opinion about the Church Establishment or the extension of the franchise? Why should the country be prevented by that difference from availing itself of the administrative capacity of both? And why should not each be free to vote as a member of the legislature, in accordance with his personal opinion? At present a Cabinet has something of the character of a conspiracy, members often suppressing or even acting against their own opinions in order to present a united front to the enemy and to maintain their hold of power, from which no small calamities have flowed. It would not be difficult to point to instances of measures forced on a Cabinet by some leading member, his colleagues acquiescing merely from fear of a break-up, and then carried through parliament by the influence of government, though the sense both of the legislature and the Cabinet was really the other way.

The tendency inherent in party government to supersede the national legislature by the party caucus has long been completely developed in the United States, where it may be said that in ordinary times the only real debates are those held in caucus, congressional legislation being simply a registration of the caucus decision, for which all members of the party, whether they agreed or dissented in the caucus, feel bound by party allegiance to record their votes in the House; just as the only real election is the nomination by the caucus of the party which has the majority, and which then collectively imposes its will on the constituency; so that measures and elections may be and often are carried by a minority but little exceeding one-fourth of the house or the constituency, as the case may be. The



same tendency is rapidly developing itself in England; and it is evidently fatal to the genuine existence of Parliamentary institutions.

So far as England is concerned, the institution of an executive regularly elected by the legislature at large in place of a cabinet formed of the leaders of a party majority would be substantially a return to the old form of government—the Privy Council. Parliament is now the sovereign power, and election by it would be equivalent to the ancient nomination by the crown. The mode of electing and confirming a Speaker shows how the forms of monarchy may be reconciled with the action of an elective institution.

However, be the proper substitute

for party what it may, the thing here insisted on is that party is evidently in a state of decadence; that the causes of its decadence are not accidental or temporary, but inherent in its nature, which is that of an instrument of change, not that of a permanent principle of government; and that, consequently, sooner or later, some other basis for government must be found. "You are sanguine," say objectors, "if you think you can carry on constitutional government without party." We trust not; for, if it is so, the end of constitutional government is at hand. The decline of party may fairly be said to present an urgent question: for the political observer to-day—to-morrow for the statesman.

GOLDWIN SMITH.

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A poem has not the same political value as a diplomatic document. But it may possess a deeper significance; and the following lines by A. Maikoff, printed in the May number of Katkoff's monthly review, the *Russian Messenger*, are worth considering, if only from the fact that they are the work of a popular Russian poet, and are published in a popular Russian periodical.

#### TO THE EMPRESS OF INDIA.

SAY that in thee again the Prophet doth arise,  
 Say, an thou wilt, thou'rt of the gods elect;  
 But, Empress of the East! in native eyes  
 No sway imperial shall thy claim reflect.  
 There in the Orient, rooted in the soil,  
 Live prophecies and very old traditions,  
 Which round the hearts of men like serpents coil  
 And nestle in the strangest superstitions.  
 The Eastern mind has strange prognostic drawn  
 Of dark dominion chased by northern star,  
 Which, as the herald of a promised dawn,  
 Shall signalise the reign of the White Tsar!

## A SCOTTISH "ELIA."

AN obscure Scottish novelist, whose luck or whose merit obtained him favourable notice in certain journals south of the Tweed, recently, it is said, received the congratulations of an Irish friend to whom the thing was no mystery—the fact is, he remarked, everything Scotch *takes* there just now. If this candid friend was not mistaken, there is a chance that *The Life of a Scottish Probationer* may prove to be an attractive title in England, notwithstanding the circumstance that probably not one person in a hundred will have any notion of what it means. A little work with this title has just been published, which deserves its share of whatever popularity "everything Scotch" enjoys, and which might even have the effect of contributing to that popularity in the way in which Scott's novels and Burns's poems have enhanced the reputation of Kilmarnock bonnets and Glenlivet whisky. It is seven years since Thomas Davidson, the subject of the brief memoir which appears under this title, after pining through several dreary winters, the victim of a hopeless malady, "fell on the threshold of the summer," and was carried to his grave in Teviotdale, leaving behind him a few poems and a quantity of letters, which to his friends and fellow-students were precious memorials of genius, and which now tell to the world the tale of a poet and a humourist numbering his days and applying his heart unto wisdom. What came from his pen after his illness assumed a fatal aspect occupies about a half of the space to which his biographer has limited himself, and is the text to which the rest of the book is introduction and commentary. Even when illness and death therefore are not in the writer's thoughts they are in the reader's;

where they are not the central figures of the picture they are shadows in the background, more conspicuous for being there. *The Life of a Scottish Probationer* ought thus to be a book for readers whose tastes are what Davidson called "necropolitan." The charm of the volume lies in the fact, that, in spite of fate, it is bright and festal with a poet's joy in all that is sweet and fair in nature, and with a humourist's delight in all that is queer and not too deformed in man. It contains verses which bear the undoubted stamp of poetic genius, and it largely consists of letters which only a consummate humourist could have written. But to the thoughtful reader its interest in this point of view is immeasurably inferior to that which it possesses in respect of being a monument of as knightly an encounter "with that old Ishmael whose hand is against us all," as any that has been recorded.

Perhaps the most famous Probationer on record was one whose connection with the order would have made it at least as famous as himself, if his first public appearance in that character had not also been his last. Readers of *Guy Mannering* will remember the passage recording the event:—"In process of time Abel Sampson, Probationer of Divinity, was admitted to the privileges of a preacher. But alas! partly from his own bashfulness, partly owing to a strong and obvious disposition to risibility which pervaded the congregation, upon his first attempt he became totally incapable of proceeding in his intended discourse; gasped; grinned, hideously rolled his eyes till the congregation thought them flying out of his head, shut the Bible, tumbled down the pulpit stairs, trampling upon the old women who generally take

their station there, and was ever after designated a 'stickit minister.'" To Meg Merrilies and all his acquaintance it was in the latter character that the Dominie was known. His connection with the order of probationer was too slight to be of any advantage to it in the way of making it as illustrious as himself. Yet any one who is curious as to the meaning of the term may learn something from the passage in the Dominie's history in which his first appearance as a preacher is recorded. He will gather from it that after Abel had completed at the university his studies in arts and in divinity, and was duly licensed to preach the Gospel, he was, technically speaking, a probationer. If his nervousness had been less overpowering, or if the risibility of his audience had been better restrained so as to allow of his proceeding with his first discourse, his occupation for the next few years might have been to go about the country exercising his gifts as a preacher, when invited to do so, in vacant charges, or by ministers wanting his help for a Sunday or two, and in that case his proper style and title would have been Mr. Probationer Sampson. Had his probation not been cut short as it was, his lantern jaws and gaunt figure would have become familiar to grinning school-boys in numerous parishes, perhaps in several counties. Having to provide himself with a horse as the first equipment for his work, "he would have been seen riding from church to church, with his sermons and changes of raiment packed in his saddle-bags," his reward for his apostolic labours and travels being "bed and board" for a week at the place at which his saddle-bags were opened for the delivery of a specimen of his slender stock of sermons. Since the Dominie's day the world has changed for the preacher of the Gospel as well as for other mortals. But in some respects the probationer of to-day is as nearly as possible what he was then. His life is still one which has its own share of romance, from

which indeed rather an uncommon share of romance is excluded only by the fiction that those who preach the Gospel care little whether or not they can manage to live by the Gospel. His *Lehrjahre* is followed by a *Wanderjahre* which cannot last for ever, and in the course of which he gains or loses a fortune as often as he appears in his proper character, that is to say, as often as he has to exhibit his gifts in a vacant charge. If his discourse pleases by its piety or its bombast, by its logical force or by the force with which its logical weakness is delivered, it is manse and stipend to him; if it makes no impression, or a bad one, he has lost a living by preaching it. The event too, whatever it may be, is known to the public and to all his friends and acquaintance, including perhaps (as in Davidson's case) an aged father and mother, whose supreme desire is to see their son settled in life, and possibly "a nearer and dearer one yet than all other," who has a still deeper interest in the question of his settlement in life than his father or his mother. It is not every probationer whose *Wanderjahre* is concluded within one twelvemonth, and when it extends to three or four years, the hopes which cheered and brightened its commencement are apt to be chequered with dismal apprehensions as to its end. Apart therefore from the circumstance that the probationer sees cities and men and congregations in the course of his travels, his life is not destitute of variety and adventure, nor without opportunities for the cultivation of gifts like those with which Thomas Davidson was destined to preach to a larger and more appreciative audience than ever listened to his sermons.

It is only, it must be remarked, in one of the Scottish Churches that this description of the probationer is now strictly applicable. But to that Church Davidson belonged. In the Established and Free Churches licentiates are as a rule employed at mission stations, and as assistants to ministers,

much as deacons are in the Church of England, and earn in that way a modest stipend, on which they are able to nourish the hope of being promoted some day or other to a parochial or, at any rate, a ministerial charge. In these Churches the probationer accordingly is hardly known by that name. It is only in the United Presbyterian body, whose Committee of Supply distributes preachers over the country according to a regular plan, that the legitimate representative of the old probationer is now to be found. Davidson was on the "list" of probationers in that Church for five years, and for the first half of that period, until fairly disabled by illness, travelled wherever he was sent by the Committee of Supply. He had gifts as a preacher, but they were not popular gifts. In truth, they were unpopular gifts—modesty amounting almost to Abel Sampson's nervousness, disdain of clap-trap, sense, sincerity, culture, being among the number. As a preacher, therefore, his probation was not encouraging, and possibly never would have been brilliant. In spite of his talents, or rather in virtue of them, he seemed as likely as any of his contemporaries—far more likely than the dullest dullard of them all—to lapse finally along with Abel Sampson and many other good and some able men into the condition of "a stickit minister." His biographer, with a natural desire to screen the Church to which Davidson belonged from the imputation of indifference to genius, labours to make it appear that the poet and humourist was not unsuccessful as a probationer. Davidson himself took another and, it would seem, a juster view. He knew the worth as well as the worthlessness of popularity. He was strenuous in advising his probationer friends to cultivate it with all their might, especially in the way of an energetic delivery. He was resolved, "if the great Healer should bid him preach again," to follow the advice which he gave his friends. But this resolution,

announced by him in a letter written a few weeks before his death, was very much of a recollection, and very little of an anticipation, and pointed to the fact that the most gifted probationer of his time had been weighed in the balance of popular judgment and found wanting—a hint perhaps to Church reformers that even when the sheep are free to choose their shepherd, mistakes may possibly occur.

It was, as has been said, after his name was placed on the list of probationers of the United Presbyterian Church, and indeed after the time when it might as well have been transferred to the catalogue of preachers whose probation was ended, that he wrote those poems and letters, the publication of which, as his biographer has well judged, is the best possible monument to his memory. Davidson might, therefore, be left to speak for himself in some of these later writings of his, and to furnish a new instance of the truth or falsehood of the Irish dictum—that everything Scotch *takes* in England. But it will perhaps not be without interest for the reader of these pages if we first avail ourselves of the help of his biographer to take a glance at the earlier part of his career, and to note some of the influences which regulated the growth and fashion of his genius and his character.

He was born in a shepherd's hut, near Jedburgh, in July, 1838, and, with the exception of the period of his university career and of his wanderings as a probationer, his life was spent in different places in the neighbourhood of that famous border town. All the influences of flood and fell, of song and story, which have rendered the border counties of Scotland so prolific of singers, and to which the genius of Scott owed so much of its inspiration, were influences in which Davidson's mind was steeped from his infancy, and from which he was never less insulated than when he was furthest away from the Cheviots and the Teviot. Influences no less

favourable to his character and the growth of his mind were those to which he was subjected in his father's house. His parents were born and married south of the border, but they were Scotch by devoted attachment to the Secession Church, and, as his biographer hints, by the cultivation of all the virtues upon a little oatmeal, in which the Scotch peasantry have always been considered adepts. When he was four years old he was put in training for the vocation of poet by being taken by his father on his rounds among the hills. At six years old he had devoured every scrap of child's literature he could lay his hands on, and "his mind was filled with a mass of border traditions and ballads." From his twelfth to his twenty-third year the home of the family was on a farm in the parish of Ancrum. Here Ruberslaw and Minto Craggs, Tweed-side and the Eildon Hills were scenes on which the eye of the youthful poet feasted on his long journeys to and from school. Among such scenes it was inevitable he should become a student of Sir Walter. He sat far into the night reading his novels and his minstrelsy, and alarmed his anxious mother lest "reading Walter Scott should turn his head." By the advice of Dr. Nicol, minister of the church of which the shepherd and his wife were members, who detected the boy's ability, he was enrolled as a pupil of the Jedburgh Academy, and after spending a few years in that institution, removed to Edinburgh to begin his studies for the ministry. His biographer gives us some glimpses of Scotch university life, for which English readers will be thankful to him. But it is enough here to say that Davidson's introduction to it served to mark distinctly his vocation as a poet and his bent as a humourist. Like a born singer as he was, he sat in his city lodgings dreaming for hours of his native borderland, and with a humour which already showed that a veritable, if lesser, Elia had been born on Scottish ground, he described to

old friends his new experience. Though he had not yet made the acquaintance of the daintiest of English humourists, it was in Elia's manner that he related in one of his letters "how he and a companion had been driven to the *café* in search of their dinner because a fellow-lodger in charge of the commissariat had ordered salt herring and potatoes for the mid-day meal;" moved thereto by the fact that in his habit of chanting in an ejaculatory manner certain random lines, generally the introductory ones of any song that suggested itself. The particular line which Davidson was most frequently crooning over at that time was—

"I hae laid a herrin' in saut."

Poetry, as well as hunger, was sauce for the dinner on this occasion, and specially for the apple-tart.

Tart! it was no simple tart we were eating! It was an aggregate of all savoury substances, of all delicate essences, of all delicious dainties. There was flour in it, fine flour at the sowing whereof ploughboys had whistled, over the green expanse whereof birds had lilted and warbled, and at the reaping whereof the reapers had sung the songs of harvest. . . . As a background to this, imagine two fellows sitting grim, assiduous, anatomical, bone-discovering, over potatoes and salt herrings."

As might almost have been anticipated from the decided bent of his mind towards literature, that starved and neglected department of university business, Davidson's career as a student imperfectly answered the expectations of some of his friends, but it gave ample promise of a brilliant future in the respect and admiration which it drew to itself from his fellow-students. In the English literature class in which he had the opportunity of displaying his poetic gifts, he obtained only the second place. But the poem of *Ariadne at Naxos*, by which he gained that place, was zealously passed from hand to hand among his fellow-students, was submitted by one of them to the critical judgment of Thackeray, and to the great delight of



many friends and the utter astonishment of the author, appeared, with an illustration, in the *Cornhill* in 1860. In the music of the verse and the delicate tenderness of the sentiment, the poem shows clearly that Davidson had not in vain combined some study of the melodious minstrelsy of Greece with an erudite acquaintance with Border Ballads. First prize poems, as a rule, after one day's fame, are consigned to eternal oblivion outside the University Calendar. It would be curious to consider in how many instances second prize and third prize poems have a different fate, or deserve it. In this case it would have been interesting to have had Thackeray's judgment, or Matthew Arnold's, as to the comparative merits of *Ariadne* and the poem, now, it is to be feared, no more, to which it was declared by academic authority inferior.

Strangely enough, the record of Davidson's divinity course, which extended over five years, and which is to be traced in his journals and letters, begins with the first mention of his illness. On his way to Edinburgh he caught cold, in consequence of travelling by rail in wet clothes. It was many weeks before he recovered, and he was always afterwards very susceptible of cold. It is not beneath the dignity of journalism to note the circumstance. It may be that many cases of illness might be traced to the sufferer having sat in a railway carriage in damp clothes; but it is not every illness thus induced which is as memorable as Davidson's has been made to those who read his poems and letters, and who "assist" at a death scene from which fear has been driven away by piety indeed, but also by subdued laughter.

During his divinity course, "not wishing to eat the bread of idleness," and eager to relieve his parents from the burden of supporting him, he laboured as a teacher in one or two places, particularly at Forres, where he stayed a couple of years, and where he is still remembered as a "tall,

erect, slender young man, with hair and complexion exceedingly fair, with a lofty forehead, and with an eye in which rest and reflection and deep meaning were to be noted."

He loved teaching no better than other poets, or than many who are only poets in detesting drudgery; but "independence" was very much to his taste, even though he had to teach for it. "After all I like Forres very well; the consciousness of independence gives life a smack which for me it never had before; for there is a real pleasure in being able to say as you put your butter on your bread—'I have bought this bread and I have bought this butter; ergo, I have a right to them both.'"

While he was at Forres the monotony of a life of uncongenial toil was broken for him by Presbytery examinations, of which he affected fits of inexpressible horror, and by the composition of verses, of which at least one specimen—"The Auld Ash Tree"—is likely to live. As Mr. Scott Riddell, a good judge in such matters, has said, it breathes the true spirit of simple Scottish song.

"There grows an ash by my bower door,  
And a' its boughs are buskit braw  
In fairest weeds o' simmer green,  
And birds sit singing on them a'.  
But cease your sangs, ye blithesome birds,  
An' o' your liltin' let me be;  
Ye bring deid simmers frae their graves  
To weary me, to weary me!"

That great crisis which happens at least once in the lives of most men, and which is inevitable in the life of a poet, occurred in Davidson's experience after he had taken up his residence in Edinburgh in 1861, and is thus recorded by his biographer:—

"In the sister of one of his fellow-students he found a companion of kindred tastes, who cared for the books in which he delighted and shared his enthusiasm for poetry and for music. All through his wanderings as a probationer, and during the long years of trouble, he wrote the weekly letter, and the letter which he received in reply was one of the joys that lightened his darkness. In this attachment he found a new motive for intellectual activity."

If only on account of this attachment, one of the purest and tenderest of which there is any record in the lives of those who learned in suffering what they taught in song, Davidson's experience at the conclusion of his divinity course was calculated to turn a wholesome heart to gall. The sermon which he preached before the Presbytery on presenting himself to be taken on trial for licence was rejected. It is seldom that in any Presbytery any student (be his gifts as poetical or prosaic as they may) meets with anything but compliments and congratulations on such an occasion. As a rule, some member of court, after hearing a few sentences of the sermon, is prepared to affirm that the young preacher will prove a burning and a shining light, and in this judgment it is the custom for all present to express their hearty concurrence. It is difficult to see why this custom, good or bad as it may be, should have been set aside in Davidson's case. Since the Presbytery of Edinburgh is obliged to hear its share of the first discourses of all those preachers, not born orators, under whom Christian congregations have afterwards to groan or sleep, and must thus, in the course of many years, have allowed many sermons of little merit to pass muster, it might have been expected that a discourse rejected by the Presbytery would be found to be marked by some remarkable features either of literary or doctrinal depravity. Davidson's biographer, himself a preacher of merit, assures us that the reader of the poet's sermon looks in vain for anything to justify its rejection. The thing is a mystery like other proceedings of Church courts in ancient and modern times; for example, the application of Jeddart justice to cases of heresy, by which a person suspected of that crime is suspended from office before he is regularly accused or brought to trial—hanged, and then tried.

Happily, however, it would seem that, as far as Davidson was concerned, there is little to regret in his

rejection by his Presbytery. He had the art, which few poets have had, unless, like himself, they have been humourists as well as poets, of turning evil to good on the score of enjoyment as well as of intellectual and moral profit. He felt keenly the indignity to which he had been subjected; but he felt still more keenly the absurdity of the situation. As usual, adversity became his friend, and grinned pleasantly at his jokes. He composed a doggerel verse, beginning with

"Wee's me that I rejected am,"

which he was accustomed to sing to the tune "Coleshill," the most doleful measure in use in the Scotch churches. One young member of Presbytery, who had been Davidson's fellow-student, distinguished himself by the warmth with which he took part in the proceedings of the court. Davidson had his revenge upon him when he wrote to a friend: "I have broken bread with this man; I have cracked jokes with him; though, to tell you the truth, I had generally to act as both legs of the nut-cracker myself."

What remains to be noticed of the Probationer's story must be told in a few words. A year after his rejection he was accepted by the Presbytery, and began his travels in search of a living—a humble, rural charge, "free from colliers," being that which would have contented his ambition and gratified his tastes. What the United Presbyterian probationer has to fear, besides the chance of never obtaining a living, is that he may be sent to Orkney in winter to look for one. It was Davidson's fate to be ordered on that dismal errand. He spent some weeks on the island of Shapinshay, suffocated with smoke as long as he kept within doors, and unable, except for an hour now and again, to face the tempests raging over sea and land. Few probationers would have found Shapinshay, under such circumstances, an entertaining residence; but Davidson, to whom nothing human was alien, and much

that was human was droll, found amusement for himself even in Shap-inshay.

" . . . Really one never knows what the next five minutes will develop. I was just going to go straight into some very interesting subject or another, when the dishevelled old Eliza before mentioned made her appearance with the *Juvenile Missionary Magazine*, and a threatening of supper (both of which I knew quite well were a mere apology for a *haver*—the cunning old Eliza) and put the whole affair out of my head.

"Eliza is a very peculiar little old body. I can scarcely describe her. I have called her dishevelled, and yet there is a certain show of orderliness about her too. She always reminds me of some of the touzie little girls at country schools, bright-eyed and sprightly, with a lock of black hair hanging on their brows and threatening to make them squint all their days. Eliza is like one of these lassies turned all of a sudden forty-five years old. That looks absurd in the extreme certainly; but that does not in the least spoil the description, for Eliza is absurd. She has a good deal of shrewdness too mixed up with much nonsense: for mentally as well as bodily she is dishevelled. She has continually-recurring "lucid intervals," so continually recurring as to get mixed up with the other intervals beyond all possibility of disentanglement."

On one of his journeys he was travelling in a third-class carriage, and had for a companion an old woman, who had much to tell him respecting her family, and particularly a son, who was a soldier, "far away on the banks of the Yang-tsi-Kiang." To this incident the students of the University of Edinburgh are indebted for a song of Davidson's, "which they have often sung with great effect on occasions like that of the election of Lord Rector," and which still, we believe, maintains among them its original popularity. It thus begins:—

"My name is Polly Hill, and I've got a lover  
Bill,

But he's caused me many a pang,  
For his regiment got the rout, and he's  
gone to the right about,  
To the Yang-tsi-Kiang.

"Oh! the war had broken out, though I  
don't know what about,

But they that make the wars go hang!  
For he's gone with thousands ten to fight  
the China-men  
On the Yang-tsi-Kiang."

One evening, at a friend's house, in June, 1865, after a severe fit of coughing, he remarked: "Rather a necropolitan tone that." "No, no," his friend replied. "Ay, man," he persisted, "there's the ring o' the kirk-yard about it; it pits aye in mind o' the clap o' the shool (shovel)." His wanderings as a probationer, particularly those which made him acquainted with the dishevelled Eliza of Shap-inshay, had overtaken his strength. From this time the progress of his malady seems to have been as steady as was his determination to make no account of it. In spite of occasional blood-spitting and other indications of its gravity, he went on preaching till the end of 1866, when his career as a probationer closed on a Sunday, of which there is this characteristic record in his diary:—

"Of all places in the world, Clackmannan, Saturday, 15th December.—Came to Stirling to-day with Gibson, and after waiting some time there, continued to this place. They seem to be thoroughly in the hands of revivalists here: I am lodged in the same room with an Evangelist. I hope I love the Evangel: but I don't know about *these* Evangelists. This one is a feeble brother. He inquires 'if there is any *stir* in Glasgow?' and seems to carry on a kind of warfare against an invisible tricky, practical joker, whom he terms 'The Old Boy.' Oh, for Monday! Have read nothing this week."

His father had now leased a small holding near Jedburgh, consisting of an orchard and some fields, and to this humble, but to him delightful, home, Davidson returned, in the hope that a few weeks of rest would recruit his strength. But even from an early stage in his illness the chance of recovery was possibly small; and whatever the chance was, it seems pretty clear that the most was not made of it. Davidson, like many whose lives were valuable to mankind, appears to have been ignorant enough of the laws of health to be unconscious of his ignorance, and to be incapable of learning the lesson which duller minds have sometimes been taught by empty pill-boxes, and by waste-paper in the shape

of prescriptions. He submitted willingly, or, if not willingly, he submitted somehow, to treatment which relieved him of bile by making a skeleton of him in a week.

"I had been going on from one cold to another—carrying, of course, a little of the old forward with me to the new, and at length I could not help seeing that if I wished to advance in any direction other than cemeterywards, the sooner 'I went bald-headed' for plain *skeleton* the better. And I shelved myself accordingly. I shelved myself shortly before Christmas; I am on the shelf still, and whether or no Fate is going to put sides, ends, and a lid upon it does not yet appear very clearly. . . . The family doctor fell upon me, armed with a box of most remorseless pills, and in little more than a week reduced me to a condition which was not merely *lean*, but utterly fleshless. To give him his due, however, I must be honest enough to own that what he left of me was quite cured; in fact, it could scarcely be otherwise, seeing my complaint was neither a skin disease nor a bone one!"

Almost to the very end the inevitable stages of his progress towards the grave were regarded by him as so many accidents, fresh colds, to be encountered by new remedies and (for such often are the regular practitioner's regular remedies) new diseases and new miseries. As far as it is possible to judge from his journals and letters, it would seem that, only when it was too late, he took any decided steps for the recovery of his health, and that some of those which he then took were well calculated to make recovery impossible. If, when he was first struck with the necropolitan tone of his cough, he had given some time to the study of health, with the view of becoming his own physician, he might possibly have lived to preach many sermons, too good to be popular, and to write many poems, too good to perish. As it was, we read how, after spitting blood one Monday in November, he spent the following Monday in walking a few miles with a friend; and we anticipate with a deplorable certainty what tomorrow will bring forth in this kind:

"Tuesday.—Spent the forenoon in reading Carlyle, and in spitting and

coughing, attributable to yesterday's buffeting with wind and defiance of snow."

Such is the story (admirably told by his biographer) of the Probationer's fortunes, and of the course of his not very eventful life, till the time when its only events were those which marked the advance of death.

We have reached at this point the last chapter of the "Life." But here, as has been said, the end is a beginning. The book, in point of peculiar and characteristic interest, consists of one concluding chapter, which lends to what precedes it some value as a preface. Of this chapter, however, it is impossible to render any just account except by the method of transcribing a great part of its contents, and thus at our hands the book must have scant justice done to it exactly where its claims to notice and to approbation are least questionable. A very few extracts from the poems and letters written by the Probationer in the course of his last illness would serve to show that he had at times, in a fashion of his own, "a heart for any fate;" but our space forbidding us to quote the whole collection, we cannot hope to show in how notable a manner it was his habitual and customary way to smile cheerfully in the face of destiny when that face wore its worst frown. It is as if we were required to illustrate the genius of Beethoven, and were permitted to do so only by whistling snatches of his sonatas. Since nothing better however is possible, if we cannot give Davidson's sonatas, or any considerable specimen of their quality, as they came from his hands, we must be content to indicate, as we best can, a strain which runs through them all.

It is the old familiar strain of which love and death are alternate notes. With other imaginative writers, familiar only in fancy with the gloomier side of human experience, it is a strain of forced and rather tuneless melancholy. With Davidson, acquainted with the undertaker's shadow as with

his own, it is one of easy, artless, melodious cheerfulness—always rippling out into laughter. What he wrote was not intended to be given to the world; but if his purpose had been to supply materials for a biography, it would have been clear that he was resolved to have nothing to say to readers who take pleasure in death-bed scenes, and that in fact he held such readers and their tastes in some considerable contempt. Not that, any more than the subject of the latest religious biography written *à-la-mode*, he was ignorant of the fact that death is no joke. He comforted others with sadness—deep and genuine sadness too—when they needed it, in regard to death and his doings, though it was not his way to bestow that sort of consolation upon himself. To a friend who had suffered the loss of a daughter he wrote: "God Himself can do much (in the way of comforting the sorrowful), and indeed the most that we can do is only to remind one another of that." Only the most Beotian stupidity or the most senseless religiosity will discover any improper levity in the tone of a letter of his, in which the doom of death is registered upon authority only too indisputable, that of Professor Gairdner.

"I am going to tell you a secret—"tell no man." Seriously, I had my chest once more looked into the other night by a Glasgow doctor. He told me my left lung is 'affected,' a fact of which I have been perfectly well aware for many weeks past, but which now looms to me slightly larger through the haze of this professional confirmation. Now, that fact is a little unpleasant: in the great majority of cases the unpleasantness gradually deepens until it terminates in the plain 'necropolitan.' The coming winter, I suspect, will settle the matter (and possibly me). Now, you will understand that all this, except the hopeful possibilities it contains, is *entre nous*. (I wonder why I am betaking myself so much to my little stock of French. Perhaps it is that I am a little serious, and trying to seem the other. Well.) To people that inquire for me you will say that I am 'midding'; that I am not quite ready yet for re-entering the 'lists.'"

To say nothing of a deeply religious nature in him, his poetic gift was too

large to admit of his wayfaring in the valley of the shadow of death and erring therein as a giggling fool might err. His levity, indeed, if any can be laid to his charge, is not a sign that with him the stream of proper feeling—proper according to every accepted rule—is shallow, but that it runs deeply, and therefore smoothly: the bubbles on the surface mark the depth and even flow of the current. To him the stern realities of life and death are so great and awe-inspiring, that, with the self-deprecation of a poetic soul, he cannot allow himself to speak of them as if he could measure them with a foot-rule and enter them in a ledger; he indulges instead in a vein of banter, always at his own expense, to hide the fact that he is obliged to contemplate them in silence.

To a friend who noted in his altered looks the ravages of disease, and who advised him not to lose heart, he said, "There is no fear of my losing heart if I do not lose my lungs." The truth of this remark is what forces itself upon our notice as we peruse the correspondence with his friends, which he maintained as long as he was able to hold a pen. It challenges our attention in a variety of forms, one of the most striking of which is that of the probationer going on with his studies and his literary recreations as if his lungs were no less sound than his heart. "He resolved to study the early English dramatists, and his first weeks at home were spent reading Marlowe, Greene, and Ben Jonson." This was previous to the occasion on which, as has been seen, his physician relieved him of bile by reducing him to a skeleton. But after that time, and when, in spite of further medical help, or in consequence of it, the skeleton which was left to him could with difficulty find its way from the fire-side to the garden, he had this account to give of work still in progress.

"We must all die, and we know that pretty well. But the feeling I used to have about it, and which I suppose most people have,



was that over the hills and far away, and deep down in a certain 'dowie home,' sate that Lean One playing with his dart, and that by the time I reached him I should be so wearied and jaded going up hill and down dale, that I should take the *coup de grace* at his hands not ungratefully. But all of a sudden, or comparatively of a sudden, this idea changed itself into the feeling that he was risen up and coming over the hills swiftly to meet me, and that at the top of the very next ridge or so I should infallibly have my weasand slit and the life let out of me. To speak plainly, during all the earlier part of last winter I fully expected to be gobbled up quite shortly. Now this change of feeling—especially if it be a sudden change—about the last incident is very apt to have a paralysing effect upon some of one's faculties. At any rate one feels but little inclination to initiate anything—in the writing way, I mean. I therefore procured myself a grammar and dictionary, and sat down to learn the German language, and to see what should occur; I acquired the German language, and nothing occurred. I am alive, and can read Schiller and Goethe."

While he was waiting to see what would occur, something did happen—a report that he was dead came to his ears. He took up his pen and wrote a poem on the subject, a poem on which the labour of the file was not spared and was not wasted, but of which any specimen we could give would represent the whole only as a head or a leg might represent the human figure. Not even when death would brook no more delay, and pressed for his own as upon a bill long overdue, would the fainting student forswear his German or the poet and humourist lay aside his pen. He was laid prostrate by what he called a *dream* (*Scotticè*, a fainting-fit), of which his correspondents heard nothing but the name for many weeks. This *dream*, when the real nature of the seizure could no longer be concealed, was described by him in prose and verse.

"About six or seven weeks ago, I had quite a thrilling and romantic visitation in the shape of bleeding at the lung. I don't know very well what brought it on: it may have been over-exertion in the way of walking or lifting weights; or it may have been the sudden swoop of severe weather which took place then; or it may have been a cold, for I had a cold,—we all had colds, and the whole house-

hold was in a state of 'hoasts encountering hoasts,' as the paraphrase has it. In short—

'How it cam' let doctors tell—  
Ha! ha! the bleedin' o't!'

Come it did—first two slight attacks which I suppressed, and then another one which caught me at the fireside reading *Juventus Mundi* after breakfast, and which was of too *fountainous* a nature to be suppressed. My mother thought I was going to die; for myself, I had an avalanche of three hundred and seventy-six thoughts at once; my sister went for the doctor—having some thought that there might be 'succour in God and good leeching.' In a minute or two the affair hushed itself up again for the time, and under persuasion of morphia its visits became more and more of the angelic kind—shorter and farther between—until in a week they happily ceased altogether. To-morrow it will be five weeks since I had the last of them. The morphia often made my eyes too heavy for reading, and to keep myself from moping during the demi-semi-lucid intervals, I endeavoured to extract some faint amusement out of the attempt to lampoon myself and my rickety old lung. I send you the result, that you may see what I can do in the hobgoblin line."

Of the "lampoon," or, as he otherwise called it, "the Hobgoblinade," which accompanied this letter, only a stanza or two from the first of the four parts of which it consists can be here given, but even this will perhaps suffice to show that Davidson had in him something of the quality of S. T. C.

#### "A DOGGEREL ALLEGORY OF HEMOPTYSIS.

##### PART I.

(*The Singer catcheth Cold.*)

"Last night I left my door ajar,  
To-day I much repent it;  
For there stepped One into the floor  
Unbidden and unwanted.

"'I'm Death,' said he. 'I know,' said I;  
'I know already; bless you,  
The merest babe could ne'er mistake  
That wondrous want of tissue.'"

Davidson had still to linger on a few months after finishing his "Hobgoblinade." It was not the last effort of his muse. How the balance hung now for him in regard to the number of his days, or rather hours, was not doubtful, but he wasted no time

watching it; he devoured books with as keen a relish as ever, and exercised his pen as long as he could hold it. He thought it shameful to "succumb" when, having borne up through a long winter, he "smelt spring air and saw the crocus again." No stain of shame, even of this kind, was to blur the white shield of a noble life which he had so far carried. His weekly letter, written on the 24th of April, was in his usual vein. "On the 29th he passed calmly away."

"His poems are as beautiful as flowers or birds, and the letters might have been written by a Scotch U. P. Charles Lamb." Such is the judgment pronounced upon the Scottish Probationer by one of whom all Scotchmen are proud, whose approbation is worth a large measure of common renown. It is a judgment which will be readily indorsed by all who read Davidson's poems and letters, after having cultivated a taste for poetry and for humour by reading *Horæ Subsecivæ*. Davidson described himself, when, in his last unfinished poem, he said of his hero—

"it was his nature  
Rather to stoop than overstretch his stature."

This was his nature, and in this lies the secret of any mastery he attained in the art of living a noble life—that art which to him, as to most whose names are least perishable in the history of literature, was many arts in one. If it is a fashion for young men of parts to clutch at unripe fruit in the shape of literary distinction, it was a fashion which he could not follow. Expecting nothing from life except what was to be got by patient continuance in well-doing, and in doing things well, he learned to be, in the best sense, sufficient unto himself. His aim was not success, but merit. This was his merit, and it was his success. He did not go out to meet fame,

therefore fame has come to him. His biographer remarks upon the rapid increase of his powers as his bodily strength declined, and appeals in proof of it to that concluding chapter from which our quotations have been drawn. Perhaps there was some increase of his powers, as, for certain, there was no failure. But it is more unquestionable that time had brought along with illness the opportunity to use his powers, than that bodily debility served to augment their volume, or intensify their action. To another mind than Davidson's, illness and the prospect of death would not have been literary advantages. But such they were to him. Opportunity came with them for the man to show what he was, and with it the opportunity for the poet and humourist to exercise his gifts on themes not unworthy of them, and in circumstances which lend to his work a dramatic interest. It was only to a nature like his, strong and self-possessed in virtue of its perfect modesty and sincerity, patient in well-doing, devoid of self-seeking, asking and expecting nothing from circumstances, that the valley of the shadow of death could have been a tolerable abode, a homely bit of the world in which it was not profane to be one's self and smile. In possession of such a nature, Davidson, as a poet and humourist, had not to go on any doubtful quest after themes, entertaining from their novelty or variety; those which were thrust upon him by that old Ishmael, whose hand is against us all, were those which his good angel, jealous of his fame, might have prescribed for him; the oldest, and tritest, and dimest became in his hands as fresh, and glowing, and lightsome as if nothing had been ever said or sung about them in an evil world, or in the language of mortals.

JOHN SERVICE.

## HOW POMMIER WAS MARRIED.

DEAR BO,—Pommier is married. We have married him—we, Lys and I, and our maid Virginie. I do not mean that we have passively become his wives, or actively made him our husband, but that we have so aided and abetted him in making the maiden of his choice his wife that I feel entitled to repeat—We have married him.

It took, you will see, a long time as it was, but I am sure it would have taken years more without us. It was not that there was any difficulty in regard to what is usually the most fruitful source of difficulty when our friends are bent upon marrying and giving in marriage—the *dot*—for Pommier was very poor when he came to us, and I do not think he can have saved much of his wages since, and so he could not expect that Mademoiselle Marie Adolphine Wangermann—but I must not introduce her yet. Dear Bo, why did not your godfathers and godmothers call you Marie Adolphine instead of the barbarous name whose only presentable form we have discovered in Bo? But I ought at once to reassure you in a matter upon which my first sentence will have made you anxious: Pommier does not leave us; so when you come you may still flatter him about his roses and gladio—is it *luses* or *li*? To begin at the beginning. One day in the garden, months ago, Pommier, looking if possible graver than usual, said to me—“Mademoiselle, if Monsieur your papa”—he never says to us, Your father—“returns during my absence, will you have the goodness to tell him that I am called away on a very important affair? It is about an important letter to my father that Monsieur Billois, the schoolmaster and secretary to the *mairie*, is going

to be good enough to write, for, as you know, I unhappily cannot.” “Why, I hope your father is not ill?” “It is not that, Mademoiselle. And perhaps, Mademoiselle”—he continued, as if a bright though perhaps desperate thought had struck him—“perhaps while you are talking to Monsieur you would also be good enough to ask him if I might speak to him as to whether he would give me permission to marry. For you see, Mad—” “Permission to marry!” said I, interrupting the stream of talk that was now let loose—“why, you know that you have no need to ask his permission to marry.” “Ah, but you know, Mademoiselle, that I come from the Mayenne, and one does not the things there as one does here, and I am so well *cased* here that I would not marry if it derange Monsieur or you, though I find it very dear living alone and having to pay for my washing and cooking, or living at the *auberge*, to say nothing of Mademoiselle my intended being able to earn enough by dressmaking to keep herself. And I asked her to write to my father for his consent, for she can write beautifully, but she thought that it was better for me to pay some *sous* and get Monsieur Billois to do that; and she had reason, had she not? And if you, Mademoiselle, would ask Monsieur for his permission I should then have no need to trouble him at all; and you will tell him that I will not marry if it would derange him—is it not so? And Mademoiselle will excuse me, for I am pressed, for Monsieur the schoolmaster cannot wait, for the school recommences at one o’clock.” And Pommier fairly ran away to avoid any reply to the longest speech he had ever made. I have taken the liberty to introduce some commas and stops

into it, but there was no pause of any sort in his delivery of it; and I have suppressed some fifty "Mademoiselles."

Well, do you know, Bo, I was disappointed. We had all been busy matchmaking—tying together our two favourites, Virginie and Pommier. And here was this self-conceited Pommier presuming to choose for himself, and knocking to pieces our castle in the air. For there was a real castle in the air, as we had found an abode for our happy pair in the waste howling wilderness of attics, where you remember the former proprietor of our house had commenced fitting up a *salle d'armes* and gymnasium, and I know not what. There we thought they might be quite at home, within bell-call, and yet out of earshot, even if they should people that wilderness with "infants wailing for their absent mother." Now all this had to be given up, and for a damsel whose surroundings we did not like—the Belgian girl whose Christian names have already created a rankling jealousy in your heart.

When I told Virginie, she was quite put out. Not that she shared your jealousy of the Wangermann, for I believe "she walks in maiden meditation fancy free," like Queen Elizabeth and me, or that her "brother's friend from Paris" sometimes occupies her thoughts. But she did not like Pommier having told me first. So we had some difficulty in bringing her round. But round she duly came, and has ever since been Pommier's chief confidante, and, jointly with Lys and me, chief adviser.

A little more than a week after, Pommier, all radiant, showed Virginie a letter that he had just received from his father with his formal consent to the marriage, duly certified. This consent is a most important affair, for without it, and many other documents also, marriage becomes almost impossible. So, Bo, when the French marquis whom you say you are expecting, turns up, see that he has it or gets it, and that you may know that it is

all right, I send you a copy of Pommier's:—

"Before Maitres Henri Ruvault, and three of his brethren  
Hath appeared

"M. Adolphe Pommier, farmer, living at the place of La Fourmandry, commune of St. François Cunch de Privers.

"Who hath by these presents declared that he gives his consent to the marriage that M. René François Pommier, his son, major, issue of his marriage with De Rosalie Cerisier, deceased, at Chatillon-sur-Colmont, the 19th December, 1859, gardener at Mr. ———, living at La Ferté Milon, proposes to contract with Mlle. Marie Adolphine Wangermann, dressmaker, also living at La Ferté Milon.

"Willing that this consent should serve him before all public officers, and officers of the civil condition (*état civil*), and before all ministers of religion.

"Of which Act is done and finished at Mayenne in chambers.

"The year one thousand eight hundred and seventy-six.

"The twelfth October.

"And after reading made, M. Pommier having declared that he knoweth not to write nor to sign, relegates it to the notaries who have signed."

(Here follow the signatures, which, like all other official French ones, are past my powers of reading.)

"3f. 75c., Registered at Mayenne, the 15th October, 1876, fol. 18120, e 8. Received three francs, 75 centimes. (Signature again undecipherable).

"Seen for the verification of the signatures of Maitres Ruvault and Bicétrin (two) notaries at Mayenne, written before us. For the president of the Civil Tribunal of Mayenne in presence. Mayenne, the 18th October, 1876."

(Signed—something like "Mummy" with a tremendous flourish.)

A day or two after Virginie told us that when Pommier had taken this certificate to the *mairie*, the school-master had told him that as he had not his mother's consent, he must have a certified copy of her "act of death," and that he had accordingly got some more *sous* from Pommier for writing for it. In due course it came, and we copied it also:—

"20 Dec., 1859.—Extract from one of the registers of the acts of the *Etat Civil* of the commune of Chatillon-sur-Colmont, deposited at the record of the Civil Tribunal of Mayenne.

"The year one thousand eight hundred and fifty nine, the twentieth December, at ten o'clock of the morning, before us Gustave de

Morienne, Knight of the Legion of Honour Mayor and Officer of the *Etat Civil* of the Commune of Chatillon-sur-Colmont, canton of Gorron, arrondissement of Mayenne, department of the Mayenne, have appeared Adolphe Pommier, journeyman, aged 54 years, spouse of the defunct, and François Guitry, farmer, aged 49 years, neighbour of the defunct, both domiciled in the basbourg of this commune, who to us have declared that Rosalie Cerisier, spinner, aged 46 years, born at Oisseau, spouse of the said Adolphe Pommier, daughter of the deceased Jean Cerisier, and of the deceased Julienne Maingard, died yesterday at 3 o'clock of the evening in her domicile at the basbourg in this commune; and the declarants have said that they know not to sign the present Act of Death after reading made."

The register is signed G. de Morienne.

For a true copy of the register—

"The *commis-greffier*" (a fearful signature follows, like two sea-serpents in a death-struggle).

"Seen for legalisation of the signature of the said J. Progrès, *commis-greffier*," and so on as before.

When I next saw Pommier I asked him when the wedding was to be. "Ah, Mademoiselle, if I had only known, I would never have begun to get married. When I took my papers to get my marriage notice posted up at the *mairie*, Monsieur Billois asked me for my own papers, so I showed him my *livret* (the little book that all French workmen have to carry—their passport, in fact), but he said that that was not enough, that I must also have my act of birth, and my certificate of military service or of exemption; and so he has written for them. And you know, Mademoiselle, all this costs money. And besides I have asked Mademoiselle Adolphine whether she has her papers, and she has not, and I do not know when she will get them, for she has to write to Belgium for them. And further, I asked her to write to Monsieur the curé of my country for a copy of my certificate of baptism, for you know, Mademoiselle, that we are going to be married religiously as well as civilly, and we cannot be without the certificate which Monsieur the curé has not sent, though there is now a month since we wrote!" I duly consoled with him, and said that as I heard him whistle so at his work, I had

concluded that matters were going on all right." "Just the contrary, Mademoiselle, I whistle that I may not think!"

A few days after, Virginie came and told us that Pommier was whistling louder than ever, for he had had his application for a copy of his certificate of liberation from military service sent back because it was not written upon stamped paper, and consequently that the schoolmaster had had to write again, and Pommier to pay fourteen *sous* for the stamp. It seemed as if the fates were fighting against the wedding. At last, however, the following documents came, which, like all the others, were covered with impressed seals. To begin with the proof that Pommier was actually born:—

"25 March, 1846.—Extract from one of the Registers of the *Etat Civil* of the Commune of Chatillon-sur-Colmont, deposited at the Records of the Civil Tribunal of Mayenne.

"The year 1846, the 25th March, at three o'clock of the evening, before us, Cesar Vidier, Mayor, Officer of the *Etat Civil* of the Commune of Chatillon, canton of Gorron," &c., as before.

"Hath appeared Adolphe Pommier, labourer, aged 39 years, domiciled in this commune, who to us hath declared that to him is born this day at nine o'clock of the morning, at the village of Bas Noyers in this commune, an infant of the masculine sex, that he to us presents, and to whom he declares to wish to give the names of René François; the which infant he has had of Rosalie Cerisier, his spouse, spinner, aged 32 years.

"The said declarations and presentation made in presence of René Mullot, labourer, aged 30 years, domiciled at Breci; and of Julien Bourgon, journeyman, aged 33 years, domiciled at Chatillon.

"And the father and witnesses have declared that they know not to sign the present act of birth after that reading to them of it hath been made."

Then follow the attesting clauses and signatures, and seals, and what not. The following is the certificate of liberation from military service:—

"We, underprefect of the arrondissement of Mayenne, certify that the named Pommier René François, son of Adolphe and of the deceased Cerisier Rosalie, domiciled at La Haye Traversaine, canton of Mayenne (West), department of the Mayenne, born the 25 March, 1846, at Chatillon, canton of Gorron, depart-



ment of the Mayenne, hath been inscribed upon the census tables of the young men of the commune of La Haye Traversaine, who have competed at the drawing of the class of 1866, in the canton of Mayenne (West), and that he has been exempted from the service for default of height.

"In faith of which we to him have delivered the present certificate.

"Done at Mayenne the 16 January, 1877.

"For the subprefect on journey of revision.

"The delegate—J. Raulin" (I think it is).

There, Bo, I have now given you the four papers you must make your marquis produce, or corresponding ones, according to his circumstances. As I read the certificate of exemption it was amusing to see the way Pommier drew himself up to the full of the scant measure of height nature has dealt out to him, and how he tried to look knowing and proud as he said—"But yes, Mademoiselle, I indeed had the luck to be drawn so long before I had done growing. How unhappy I should have been if I had been as tall as I am now!"

"Now then, I hope all is in order," said I to Pommier on his return from the *mairie*. "Yes, Mademoiselle, all I want for my civil marriage; but Mademoiselle Adolphe has not yet got her papers, and we have not yet heard from Monsieur my curé. And please, Mademoiselle, will you ask Monsieur whether he will permit me to present my intended to him, and to you, and to Mademoiselle your sister?" I told him he might bring her on Sunday evening after dinner.

During dinner on Sunday we commenced pitying the poor girl coming, as it were, just for us to criticise her, so we determined to make things as easy as possible. About nine o'clock Monsieur Pommier and Mademoiselle Wangermann were announced. She is very good looking, dark, and tall—so tall, in fact, that she would not have escaped for "default of height" had she been drawn for service in the army. She was plainly dressed in dark stuff, and had an open-knitted white capeline very gracefully thrown over her hair, with its point reaching

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her forehead. I suppose she had been thinking also of how to make the interview as easy as possible for us, for she sailed into the room like a duchess, cool and collected, made a low bow to Monsieur, then bowing to us also, wished us the good evening, and said how pleased she had felt when Monsieur Pommier asked her to come and pay her respects to us; how honoured she felt to make our acquaintance; how she hoped that in the future the marriage of Monsieur Pommier with herself would not change the good relations existing between us, &c., &c. Long before her polite phrases were exhausted, Pommier had escaped, murmuring something about the garden. But she had no need of his support, and took good care that the conversation did not flag. Neither did she forget business by reminding us that she was a dressmaker, and would be proud to, &c., &c.; but this was brought in very delicately. When Pommier returned, we consoled with him upon all the trouble he had had with his papers, especially as some of them appeared to us so useless. But she would not have it that these formalities were useless. "How, Mesdames, without them, could one know that—that, for example, Monsieur Pommier was not already married?" Poor Pommier! he did not look just then like an intending bigamist; but words failing him to make a proper disclaimer, he had to give a nod, and—"But yes, she has reason;" to show his sense of the necessity of all possible precautions. Speaking of the delay in procuring the baptismal certificate, the Wangermann said something about not waiting for it when all her papers had come, as the civil marriage was sufficiently binding; but Pommier blazed up at this like a good old-fashioned peasant as he is, so she at once drew in.

As regarded her papers, the only one wanting was her act of birth. As she was born in Belgium and did

not know in what town, and as her parents were dead, this paper gave her some trouble. Pommier got very disquieted about it, almost as if he suspected her having ever been born, as she could not produce this necessary proof of it. "I cannot understand people, Mademoiselle, who could lose so important a paper. I cannot understand them!" "But, Pommier, what about your own certificate of baptism?—that is also delaying things, you know," said I, thinking I had him there. "For that, Mademoiselle, I got Monsieur the curé to write to the curé of my country, and he has sent me this letter." And a very kind letter it was, witnessing equally to the good feeling of the sender and to the good character of the receiver. The curé explained that he could read only a part of the first letter, and that that part did not include either the signature or the address, so he did not know how to reply. I hope the letter was not a fair specimen of the Wangermann penmanship. The certificate in the curé's letter was this:—

"Chatillon-sur-Colmont, Diocese of Laval.

"Extract from the Register of Baptisms.

"The 25th March, one thousand eight hundred and forty six, I the undersigned Louis Armange, vicaire (curate) of this parish, have baptized René François, born at ten o'clock this morning, of the legitimate marriage of Adolphe Pommier, and of Rosalie Cerisier, living at the village of Bas Noyers.

"The godfather was René Mulot, and the godmother Françoise Gerault. The father present. All have declared not to know how to sign.

"The register is signed—Armange, priest, vicaire.

"For a true copy, E. Dureau, priest, curé.

"At Chatillon, the 9th January, 1877."

By the time Adolphine had got her papers Lent had come, and so the wedding could not take place. It was, therefore, arranged to have it in Easter-week. Her aunt, with whom she lives, and who in turn lives with the coal merchant, had persuaded him to regularise her position at the same time; so there was to be a double wedding, and the feast was to be held at their house.

I must tell you some day, Bo, about the Christmas, Easter, and other fête-day customs here, but must now confine myself to our wedding. When the auspicious day arrived, Pommier was almost speechless with excitement about the wedding generally and his clothes in particular. His tailor had promised them, but had not brought them overnight. But about the time to start the trousers arrived. We have no false pride here, and do not keep our private affairs to ourselves. The tailor marches up the street, carefully holding out the trousers so as not to crease them, and everybody looks out of windows at them, or goes out into the street, and feels relieved that at least an instalment has come, and expresses a hope that the rest will not be long. The tailor feels himself important with the responsibility resting upon him, and tells Pommier and all the world to be calm, and count upon him. Then the waistcoat was brought up in equal state; and finally, to the general relief of all, and not more than an hour behindhand, the coat, of course a swallow-tail, was carried home in triumph.

Nor was it only about our place that there was an unwonted stir. From early morning friends had been coming in from the country in their carts to the various inns. The men had on black trousers, blue blouses, and all sorts of head-gear. The best coats and hats, carefully brought in a parcel, were only put on at the last moment at the bride's about-to-be uncle's house, or more frequently in the street in front of it, and the blouse left at the house to be resumed immediately the ceremonial part is over and the joyous part about to begin. The women were nearly all dressed in black, for the good careful souls arrange that their best dress shall serve for all their state occasions, weddings, baptisms, and funerals. Adolphine Marie (I like poking those two names at you) looked very handsome all in white, with veil and orange-flower wreath. This wreath, now

under a glass shade, forms the principal ornament of her best room—a little half-parlour, half-chamber, with a bed in an alcove, as is almost the universal custom here. However poor the girl may be, she always manages to get a white dress and veil to wear at her wedding—that is, if she dares to claim her right to wear the virgin colour—for, alas! some dare not. The other bride wore black, being, as Virginie explained to us, a widow carrying the mourning for her defunct husband up to the last possible moment—a touching devotion to his memory, is it not?

Of course we had received the usual *faire part*, asking us “to assist at the nuptial benediction.” We went also to the *mairie* to the civil marriage, to do honour to our Pommier. This enabled us to see the procession. The bridegroom went to the bride’s house, and there all were assembled, awaiting him and his best man. Poor Pommier looked very red at finding himself the observed of all observers, and redder still when he heard that his best man had not arrived. Besides the wedding party proper, there was a christening party also; for as here they do not ring the church bells for weddings, but do for christenings, they always try to arrange so that the bridegroom and bride may be at the same time godfather and godmother of some friend’s baby. By this arrangement the wished-for chiming is secured; and as here the godfather is expected to make presents to the godmother and not to the godchild, its economy would recommend it if the orthodox presents were not sweetmeats.

Pommier was not the only one who was getting fidgety about the best man, who was our village smith; for the bridesmaid, a young lady with the most wonderfully dressed hair and multitudinous pink ribbons, was letting her face get pinker than her ribbons. Her confusion was being enjoyed by a pretty little dark-haired girl—whom you will remember we used to call Mademoiselle Sairey Gamp from

her mother’s profession—who had not been invited to the wedding, and who, all the world says, is the young smith’s sweetheart—or rather would be, but for her want of *dot*; he himself being, in his way, the best *parti* and the beau of the place.

At last he came as coolly as possible, as if he knew that punctuality is not the politeness of blacksmiths. He went along, shaking hands with one half of the people with his right hand and the other half with his left, as if he were climbing hand over hand up to his place in the procession. And then Pink Ribbons gave a triumphant glance at Mademoiselle Sairey—a glance that prevented her from noticing that which her squire also sent in the same direction. Had she seen it she would not have smiled so complacently; and as it was, it fully consoled the dark-haired beauty for her rival’s seeming triumph.

At the *mairie*, Monsieur the Mayor kept us waiting a long time—I suppose while he brushed his whiskers and put on his tri-coloured scarf and sash, the grandeur of which quite justified the delay. He did not keep us long at the ceremony, for all being in order there were not many formalities to fulfil. But the registers of this place now possess the beautiful autograph of a witness to an “act of marriage” that hereafter may be quite priceless. As we went out of the *mairie*, I noticed that somebody had put a wreath on our great townsman, Jean Racine’s statue, that made it look a little less like a man wrapping a bathing towel round himself on coming out of the neighbouring river.

As it was getting late, thanks to the mayor and the groomsmen, the procession took the shortest road to the church, up the steep street, where you remember the old poacher lives who gives their chief employment to our fine *gens d’armes*. There is a good story of the old rascal, how that when he was last in trouble the *juge-de-paix* said, “Imprisonment does you no good—you seem rather to like

it." "*Mon juge*, it is that one appreciates me down there. No sooner do I arrive than I am named chief cook!" And the sinner put his fingers to his lips, and made the motion and the sound as if he were pulling out a long kiss—the motion and sound that precede the "*C'est exquis*" that winds up a Frenchman's description of his favourite dish.

The procession was still more imposing when we left the quaint old church, for it was headed by the beadle with his staff of office, tipped with a wedding favour. What is the beadle's skull-cap made of? I fancy black fluted leather. Pommier and Madame Pommier were, in their quality of godfather and godmother, throwing handfuls of sweetmeats right and left. Imagine the following they had of the urchindom of La Ferté. We always know when a christening takes place, even when it is at the Chaussée church, on the other side of the river—not by the bell-ringing—for its sound is drowned by the shriller cries of the children. What row equals that of a crowd of children in high glee?

I cannot describe the wedding feast, or rather feasts—for the affair lasted three days, as is usual here, and we did not assist thereat. They began as if business was meant, for all the men at once doffed their broadcloth, and donned their blouses—the change of raiment being chiefly effected, as before, in public. The preparations made are most extravagant. Butter rose in price in our market last Friday, in consequence of the purchases made for this feast. Virginie says thirty-four pounds were bought for it, and I have

no doubt she knows all about it. It seems strange that these economical peasants should be so extravagant at the beginning of their housekeeping—spending what would keep them for months. But it may be almost forgiven them when you think that it will be their only extravagance for some twenty years, when they will perhaps repeat it at a senior daughter's wedding. As I before said, *mon oncle*—as Pommier has already for months called him—gave the feast, so his and Marie Adolphine's savings will not be diminished. Usually the parents on both sides club together, and jointly provide the wedding entertainment.

After two or three hours' eating and drinking, the guests, with the host and hostess, walked arm-in-arm in procession through the town, and then went and danced in a friend's garden, to the music of the town *fanfare*, reinforced by a fiddle. In the evening there was more eating and drinking, that lasted far into the night. The next day the feasting promenades and dancing were repeated—the *brass knocker* of an Anglo-Indian wedding was nothing to it. On the third day, as signs appeared of the running out of supplies, many of the guests left, and their desertion enabled the old campaigners who stuck to their posts, to have a grand winding-up supper.

Two days have since elapsed, and Pommier has just put in an appearance. I will not distress you by describing him. But have I not given you a long letter, Bo? In return, do likewise. All salute you, including Shim and Tum.

Your ever faithful

A. M. T.

## TO HERMIONE.

WHAT shall I liken unto thee?  
     A lily bright,  
 Whose virgin purity and grace  
 Fulfils the soul, as doth thy face,  
     With all delight.

What shall I liken unto thee?  
     A blushing rose,  
 Which, redolent of fragrance rare,  
 Half opened to the summer air,  
     All sweetness grows.

What shall I liken unto thee?  
     Some glorious star,  
 Which, hung aloft at eventide,  
 Sheds its mild radiance every side,  
     Both near and far.

No! such comparison is vain.  
     For these all three,  
 Lily, and star, and rose so fair,  
 In radiance, grace, and sweetness rare  
     Must yield to thee.



## POPES AND CARDINALS.

It is one of the penalties of greatness in this world that a man in the position of the Pope has, in his old age, to lie in state—to see his career sketched in newspapers and magazines—to know that he is the subject of protocols, notes, and declarations, that his demise is the topic of discussion in all the chancelleries of Europe—to hear his conduct canvassed, as the *Times* a few years ago canvassed that of a Prime Minister, in the past tense, even before he has perhaps seriously thought of shuffling off this mortal coil, and now and then to have to assist at his own obsequies, to overhear the candid criticism of friends and enemies alike over his grave, their speculations as to who shall take his place when he is gone and what shall be done when he has reached the end of the furrow; and in the case of Pius IX. the criticism and speculation have been particularly free and frank.

There is, or has been till now, a superstition that none of the Popes can outlive St. Peter, and, as far as the history of the Papacy can be traced, no Pope till now has reigned longer than the Apostolic Founder of the Holy See. Pius VI. reigned within three or four months of five-and-twenty years; and till the reign of Pius IX. this was the nearest approach to the alleged pontificate of Peter. The duration of that is said to have been twenty-five years, two months and seven days. Sylvester I. reigned twenty-four years, and Adrian's reign fell short of that only by about ten days. The longest reign next to these is the reign of Pius VII. That was twenty-three years and a half. But Pius IX. is now in the fiftieth year of his Episcopate, in the thirty-first year of his Pontificate, and in the eighty-fifth year of his age. He has, with

one or two exceptions, outlived all the Cardinals who took part in his election in the June of 1846, has confuted the old belief embodied in the words *Non videbis annos Petri*, and is to-day, with one exception—that of Queen Victoria—the oldest reigning sovereign in Europe. Her Majesty is the Pope's senior as a sovereign by nearly ten years. But with this exception the Pope has seen every throne in Europe change its occupant since the triple crown was placed on his brows in St. Peter's, and some of them he has seen refilled more than once.

The Papacy itself is no longer what it was. It is no longer, politically, one of the Powers of Europe. But the throne of St. Peter still stands; St. Peter's successor is still a sovereign, and is still entitled to the pre-eminence of honour accorded to him of old by Catholic sovereigns, although Pius IX. has had to share the common fate of the crowd of grand dukes and duchesses whose rule reproduced in Italy a few years ago the English heptarchy; and to-day he is like the rest of the sovereigns *de jure* in the *Almanach de Gotha*—a king without a kingdom. Time has brought its bitterness even to him. He has survived his own greatness, been shorn of almost all his feathers, and reduced to a palace and a garden, but, like Bacon, the gallant old man "scorns to go out in snuff," and he has done his best to make up for the loss of his princely prerogatives by arrogating to himself the spiritual prerogatives which till now have been vested in general assemblies of the Church, decreeing his own personal infallibility and constituting himself absolute sovereign of the intellect and conscience of Christendom. These things, independently of all political changes, make the pontificate

of Pius IX. one of the most notable in the history of the papacy; and the first question that the next conclave will have to ask itself when it assembles will be whether it has anything left to do but to register the last decree that the Cardinal Chamberlain happens to find in the pigeon-holes of the papal *escritoire*.

Yet, after all, it was only by a mishap that Cardinal Mastai-Ferretti attained the triple crown at all. The popular candidate was Cardinal Gizzi, and the most powerful man in the college itself was Cardinal Lambruschini. Mastai-Ferretti was only one of a crowd, and in the first ballot he hardly seemed to be in the running. Lambruschini had the highest number of votes, and everything seemed to mark him out as the future Pope. But there's many a slip 'twixt the cup and the lip even in a conclave; and the Italians have a proverb that, in these contests, the favourite never wins. He did not in this case. In the second and third ballot Mastai-Ferretti came more and more distinctly to the front, Gizzi disappeared from the lists, and Lambruschini fell hopelessly into the rear. But if Lambruschini could only have kept open the conclave a few hours longer he might have displaced his rival, and perhaps have placed the tiara upon his own brows, or, if not there, might at least have placed it upon the brows of his friend Franzoni; for Mastai-Ferretti was in bad odour with the court of Austria on account of his sympathy with the National party of Italy, and when the ballot that made him Pope was taken, the Austrian Plenipotentiary was on his way from Vienna with a veto in his pocket against the Archbishop of Imola, and with Cardinals enough in his train to turn the scale in favour of the Genoese Cardinal. The veto arrived a few hours too late, and the lagging Cardinals, entering the Holy City the day after the fair, found the Romans shouting *vivas* in honour of a sovereign whose name they hardly knew how to pronounce. The telegraph and the railway have put an end to all

risk of anything of this kind happening again; for Rome is now within speaking distance of Vienna, Paris, Berlin, and London; and unless the conclave sits, as it is said it will sit, within twenty-four hours of the Pope's death, and, under a dispensing bull, elects his successor in *presenti cadavere*, there will be time between the announcement of the Pope's death and the day usually fixed for the holding of the conclave for all the Cardinals of Europe to reach Rome and to give their votes.

That implies, also, that the Veto Powers will this time be able to make their voices heard, if they wish, in the conclave, and that Prince Bismark will have an opportunity to assert his right to a veto as well as Austria, Spain, France, and Portugal. At present these are the only powers that possess a veto upon the nomination of a Pope, and it has been challenged in the case of Portugal, although that is the only case in which it is said to rest upon a papal bull. Its origin in the case of France, Spain and Austria is only to be traced conjecturally; but the right itself has never been denied, and it has frequently been exercised. Austria intended to exercise it in the case of Pius IX., and the court of Madrid did exercise it in the case of Cardinal Giustiniani in 1830, and exercised it without assigning a reason, although the reason may possibly be conjectured from the fact that the Cardinal had been Nuncio at the Spanish court, and was apt to be frank in his criticism upon the foibles of persons in high position. The court of France, in 1823, tried to place its veto upon the election of Leo XII., and that veto would have barred his election if the French Cardinals had not been outwitted by the Italians, as the Austrians were outwitted by the Roman party in 1846.

These vetos are the only check upon the absolute power of the College of Cardinals to place any one whom they can agree upon themselves by a vote of two-thirds upon the throne of St. Peter; and, as far as the Roman

Catholic Church itself is concerned, the choice of the sacred college is final and binding upon all, whether that choice be ratified by the veto powers or not. The bull of Nicholas II., vesting the power of election in the College of Cardinals, prescribes a form of procedure which is hardly distinguishable from that by which the head of one of our own Oxford colleges is chosen. M. About has put the papal constitution into a sentence: "The Pope elects the Cardinals, and the Cardinals elect the Pope." That is the key to the whole papal system. Yet, except when in conclave, a Cardinal, as such, has no more voice or authority in the government of the Holy See than an acolyte who swings a censer in St. Peter's. He need not even be in orders at all; and that has been the case with some of the most distinguished of the Cardinals. Clement XII., in 1735, made even a child of eight years old—Don Louis of Bourbon—a Cardinal. Sixtus V. paid a similar compliment to one of his nephews, and Paul IV. startled the Sacred College by nominating a lawless and ferocious *condottiere* to the Cardinalate—Carlo Caraffa—one of his own nephews, who, knowing the weak side of the Pope, contrived to be surprised kneeling before a crucifix in an agony of remorse. Leo X. offered the red hat to Raphael, to console him for the loss of Maria di Bibiena, the niece of one of Leo's Cardinals, and in the reign of Sixtus IV. Cardinal's hats were bought and sold with as little ceremony as an advowson is now bought and sold in our own Church. This scandal has long since ceased, and I believe there is now an understanding that no more Cardinals shall be created unless they have taken orders; but it is, of course, and can be, nothing more than an understanding, for the creation of Cardinals is a matter appertaining solely to the Pope, and Pius IX. cannot bind Pius X. If Popes could have been controlled in this way they would have been controlled long ago, for the Council of Trent, by one of its decrees,

imposed upon Cardinals the same canonical conditions as those imposed upon bishops. But the power which makes a Cardinal can release him from the obligations supposed to be imposed by the Council of Trent, and this dispensing power has been exercised again and again. It was exercised in the case of Albani, and it had been exercised before then in the case of the Archduke Albert. The Archduke never was in orders, and Cardinal Albani only became a sub-deacon in order to sit in the conclave of 1823, and to turn the scale in favour of the Austrian candidate. He had been excused till then on the plea that it might be necessary for him to relinquish the purple and to marry, in order to prevent the extinction of his family; and probably even then Albani would not have taken orders but that there was no power in the Church to renew his dispensation and to permit him to vote except as a deacon.

There is, apparently, but one real disqualification for the Cardinalate, and that is that a man must not have a wife. A wife is fatal to all hopes of the red hat. He may have been married and still be eligible as a widower; or being a Cardinal he may, under a dispensation of the Pope, relieve himself of the obligation of his position, marry, put away his wife, and return to his old position in the Church. But he cannot keep a wife and wear the purple at the same time, and in strictness he cannot exercise the highest privilege of the Cardinalate—that of voting in conclave for Pope—unless he has taken orders. The Archduke Albert sat in the conclave of Sixtus V., under a special license from the previous Pope, and sat apparently without protest from the College; but his case, as far as I can find, stands alone. Albani was compelled to take orders, and that is the rule—that unless a Cardinal is in orders he shall not vote, although the Cardinalate in itself is not an ecclesiastical rank, but only a sort of semi-spiritual peerage. It represents a degree in the papal court; that and nothing more. But if a man is

in orders the red hat gives him a right, upon the death of the Pope, to take part in the government of the holy city, to sit in the conclave, and to ballot for his successor, or to be a candidate for the papal chair himself. He may be under sentence as a criminal—as a heretic—as a traitor. He may even be under sentence of excommunication. But neither heresy, crime, nor the major excommunication can rob a Cardinal of his right to sit in the conclave and to exercise the highest function of his office—that of taking part in the choice of a Pope.

Till the time of Clement V. many Cardinals had been deprived of their franchise, and conspicuously the Colonna Cardinals by Boniface VIII. But the case of these Colonna Cardinals created so much trouble in the Church, and threatened so many inconvenient consequences, that Clement V. revoked the sentence of Boniface and issued a bull making the right of a Cardinal to vote inviolate; and that is now the rule of the Church. A Cardinal may be fined, may be imprisoned, may be degraded, may be deprived of every privilege appertaining to his rank, except one, but his franchise is indelible—that cannot be touched by either Pope or Council. Several of the Cardinals in the reign of Leo X. conspired against the life of the Pope, were tried, found guilty, and sentenced to imprisonment, degradation and death, but in every case except that of Cardinal Petrucci, the sentence was revised—Petrucci was strangled there and then in the castle of St. Angelo, and Cardinal Soderini, even after a second conviction and a second imprisonment, was permitted to take his seat in the conclave, and to vote for the election of Clement VII. Yet the last or almost the last official act of Pope Adrian had been the issue of a Bull ordering that the Cardinal of Volterra should on no condition be released from prison, and the college marked its contempt for this Bull, by selecting Soderini to say the mass when the Cardinals were entering the conclave. But the leading case is that

of Cardinal Coscia. He was brought to trial under Clement XIII. for fraud, malversation, and speculation. He was found guilty and sentenced to a fine of 200,000 crowns, to ten years' close confinement in St. Angelo, to deprivation of his See of Benevento, and to absolute degradation from the rank and privileges of the Cardinalate. But even in Coscia's case the Pope afterwards wrote a chirograph revoking the sentence of absolute degradation, and when upon the election of Clement's successor, a conclave was convoked, Cardinal Coscia put in his claim to be set free, and that request was at once conceded. He was released for the conclave, and an Ambassador in Rome, returning to his palace after the opening of the conclave, met Coscia in the shut chariot of Cardinal Acquaviva, who had been to fetch him from prison in the Castle of St. Angelo, and was taking him to his cell in the Quirinal, to give his vote with the rest.

The College of Cardinals, when complete, consists of seventy members, representing perhaps in about equal proportions the three orders of the priesthood, although in conclave bishops, priests, and deacons all rank alike, and all possess equal privileges. Mazarin, for instance, was a deacon; Richelieu was a priest. But the sacred college recognises none of these distinctions of the hierarchy; and except that one Cardinal may be a Cardinal *in petto*, and another a Cardinal whose name has been published to the world, or, as it is called, promulgated, all Cardinals are equal. There is, I believe, no limit to the number of Cardinals that the Pope can create *in petto*, and Pius IX. is said to have exercised his privilege freely; but seventy is with Cardinals the perfect number, and these seventy must be announced to the world before they can take their seats in conclave. Cardinals *in petto* have several times put in a claim to vote; but that claim has never been recognised, and it was disallowed a few years ago even in a case where the Pope had explained to

the college the reasons which rendered it inexpedient for him to publish the names, and the principle thus emphatically established that a creation to be recognised must be made public.

The creation of a Cardinal is, however, with the Pope, a mere act of mental volition. He creates Cardinals by thought or by a stroke of his pen. Perhaps many men are Cardinals to-day without possessing the slightest knowledge of their own greatness; for all that the Pope has to do is to put down their names and to announce the fact to themselves or to the dean of the college, or, without doing either of these things, to place the list in the pigeon-holes of his desk to be found after his death by the chamberlain of the palace. These men are Cardinals *in petto*. Their creation is complete, but till their mouths are unsealed and their names published, they are not canonically in a position to enter a conclave. Till the 11th century the college contained only twenty-eight Cardinals; but the Bull of Sixtus V. fixes the number at seventy, and these seventy now legally constitute the consistory. But it is not necessary that all the seventy should be present to constitute a conclave. In 1846 the college had no more than sixty-two names upon its roll, although Gregory had in his lifetime created as many as seventy-five Cardinals, the greatest number probably ever created by a Pope, and of these sixty-two only thirty were in Rome when the great bell of St. Peter's announced that the holy city was without a head, and fifty Cardinals only took part in the conclave which placed the keys of St. Peter in the keeping of Pius IX. That, however, or any less number, is sufficient to constitute a conclave, if ten days shall have elapsed from the announcement of the Pope's death, and if in the conclave the Pope elect secures a vote representing a majority of two-thirds of the Cardinals present.

"You have not seen Rome," it used to be said, "if you have not seen it during a vacation of the See;" and it was in the spirit of this observation

that Fra Bacio answered the question of Pope Paul—"Which do you think the finest festival in Rome?" "That which is held when a Pope dies and a new one is being made." All police in the holy city at once collapsed. The army disbanded itself, and generally took to pillage, the courts of law were closed, the nobles armed their retainers, drew chains across the streets, and kept watch and ward for themselves. Neither court, tribunal, nor chancery was held. Procurator, advocate, and cursors all alike stood with their hands in their girdles. All the prisons except that in the Castle of St. Angelo were thrown open, and the consequence was that riot ran wild till Rome again found herself in the hands of a ruler. The middle classes amused themselves according to their bent in assassination or speculation upon the result of the conclave. The Banchi Vecchi and Nuovi were turned into an exchange, and probably as much money changed hands upon the chances of this or that man coming out of the conclave Pope as changes hands with us upon the Derby or the Oaks. It is illegal now to make a bet upon a papal election, and the police of Victor Emmanuel will, I suppose, reduce the "delights of the interregnum" to such intrigues as the representatives of France, Italy, and Germany, may be able to carry on with the Cardinals before they are shut up, and to such plots and surprises as the Cardinals themselves may be able to accomplish when shut up in the Vatican or the Quirinal like an English jury in Westminster Hall to find a verdict.

The scene of all recent conclaves has been the Pauline Chapel, in the Palace of the Quirinal; and if the walls of that chapel could tell tales, we should hear many racy anecdotes of Italian wit and Italian craft. A Bull of Gregory X. regulates the ceremonial even to its minutest detail, and that Bull prescribes that the Cardinals entering the conclave with a single attendant, shall be kept in close confinement till they have made a Pope, and if they have not agreed upon a



name within three days, that they shall be restricted to one dish each at dinner and supper till the fifth day, and that after the fifth day they shall be reduced to bread, wine, and water. Perhaps I need hardly say that the mode of election is the ballot. The voting takes place in the presbytery, in front of the altar, and the Cardinals are seated within the railings of the presbytery, with all the conveniences for writing. A canopy of green silk marks the stalls of those Cardinals whose creation dates back before the last pontificate. The creations of the last Pope are distinguished by violet.

The Bull of Gregory XV. recognises three modes of selection—by inspiration, by compromise, and by ballot; but the principal mode in use is that of the ballot. This is taken with the greatest secrecy; and it is seldom known out of the conclave, and not often within it, how the Cardinals individually vote. The electors are strictly forbidden to confer with any one, even with their colleagues; and the voting takes place through sealed papers, that is to say, each Cardinal at the first ballot writes upon a slip of paper the name of his candidate, and in order to identify it if necessary adds a text of scripture at one end of his vote and his name at the other end. These ends are both folded up, and the vote with its open name is placed in the consecrated chalice standing on the altar of the chapel. If in the first ballot any one comes out with two-thirds of the votes, there is an end of the matter—the Pope is made. But if no one has a majority, a second ballot is taken in order to give those who wish an opportunity to accede to the vote of another. This is called voting by access. It is the second form of ballot; and it is generally taken in the afternoon. It is possible that in this way the majority may be produced. But if it is not, the papers are burnt, and the conclave adjourns. The next day the votes are taken afresh, and taken, if necessary, day after day. It is the common process of casting out, and the only restriction upon the voting is that

no Cardinal shall vote for himself. This is why the votes are required to be signed, in order, if necessary, to ascertain that the requisite majority, when it is an exact majority, has not been made up by the vote of the candidate himself.

But when Cardinals conspire to carry a man upon whom they have set their hearts they do not resort to clumsy and transparent tricks of this kind. They try bolder and more ingenious plans. The Imperial veto, for instance, has often been turned to account to clear the way for a man who, if proposed at once, would not have the slightest chance of election. A man is put up who is known to be obnoxious to one of the Powers. He receives within a few of the requisite number of votes, and is at once blackballed, by, say, the Austrian representative. Another candidate, obnoxious to France or Spain, is then put up, voted for, apparently, with great spirit, and vetoed by a French or Spanish Cardinal; and the course is thus cleared for the nomination of the man whom the majority of the conclave have set their hearts upon electing, and who has till now, therefore, been kept in the background. The veto can be exercised but once; and the object of these manœuvres is to draw the sword from its sheath. France in 1823 wished to keep Leo XII. out of the papal chair; but a veto, if it is to be recognised by the conclave, must be put in before the canonical majority has been attained, and the scrutators, knowing the intention of the French Cardinals, and knowing also how the majority of the Cardinals intended to vote, counted in Leo with such adroitness that he was Pope before the representatives of the Veto Power could open their mouths to protest. Innocent X. was elected with a French exclusion over his head. Clement VIII. was excluded in three conclaves by the Spanish veto, and yet elected after all, and, to make his triumph complete, elected over the head of the Spanish nominee. Cardinal Santorio, the Spanish candidate, had, upon paper,

the necessary majority of two-thirds of the college. His election was apparently secure. His friends carried him in triumph from his cell to the Pauline Chapel to receive the adoration of the Cardinals. The conclavists plundered his cell. The Pope-Elect graciously forgave all his enemies, and selected as his title that of Clement VIII. But his opponents, although in a minority, and apparently in a hopeless minority, detected at the last moment signs of weakness in the ranks of the victorious party, and meeting in the Sistine Chapel, one of the boldest of the Roman nobles, Cardinal Colonna, rose and, in a voice like Jove, declared, "God will not have Sanseverina, neither will Ascanio Colonna." These bold words of Colonna's turned the scale, and when the votes came to be counted, the Cardinal of Sanseverina, instead of having thirty-six votes, had only thirty, and Cardinal Aldobrandino, although only put up as a supernumerary candidate, became Pope, and to emphasize his victory over the Spaniard, took the title which Sanseverina had proclaimed as his own—that of Clement VIII. It requires boldness and address to carry a candidate in the face of a veto and of a majority like this, but if the man is popular with the college, the wit of twenty Italians pitted against that of one generally ends in the defeat of the veto and majority alike.

The keenest struggles are those which take place when the college is divided against itself, and a resolute and politic minority of a third can, by an adroit use of the forms of election, contrive to secure the return of its candidate against the majority. But this of course presupposes division in the ranks of the majority, and even then sometimes, if the representative is to be carried, he must be carried by a stroke of generalship. Cervini's election was carried by a stroke of this kind. The suffrages of the college were divided almost equally between Caraffa, Ferrara and Cervini; but Ferrara was obnoxious to the Imperial party, although in high favour with

the French, and his friends believed that if the sittings could be prolonged four-and-twenty hours, his return might be secured. If Cervini, therefore, was to be carried, he must be carried at once, and carried by surprise; and his friends determined that he should not lose his chance for want of an effort. Two of them, Cardinal Madruzzi and Cardinal Caraffa, stole privately to Cervini's cell to prepare him for anything that might happen, and then, when the college was assembled, and the debate ran high and hot, Cardinal Crispo, one of the confederates, sprang to his feet, and with the exclamation, "Up, and let us be going; I for one will not rebel against the Holy Ghost!" led the way at the head of a crowd of Cardinals to Cervini's cell, hailed him as Pope, and carried him into the Pauline Chapel amid general cheering; for even his opponents, when they saw the game was over, joined in the cheering of his friends, and Cervini was hoisted into the papal chair as Marcellus II. This is what passes in Rome for election by inspiration. It is one of the recognised modes of selecting a Pope, and several have been selected in this way, Gregory VII., for instance, Clement VII., Paul III., Pius IV. and V., and Julius III. It is only fair, however, to add that, strictly, election by inspiration requires that, spontaneously, without any kind of previous conference, all the electors in the college shall, of one accord, simultaneously proclaim the same individual; and perhaps it is not the fault of the Cardinals that what took place in the case of the Cardinal de' Medici, and in the case of the Cardinal of Sta. Croce, is the nearest practical approximation to an impracticable theory.

Election by compromise is when after equally long and equally fruitless deliberation, the Cardinals agree to lay aside their own individual preferences, and to leave the nomination of the Pontiff to a Select Committee, or to one among themselves. Gregory X. is said to have been the first Pope elected by compromise, and this plan was adopted

upon the suggestion of the famous Franciscan preacher, St. Bonaventura, to put an end to the scandals and inconveniences that arose from the long conclave held at Viterbo to choose a successor to Clement IV. in 1268. That is the longest conclave ever held. It was composed of eighteen Cardinals, and it sat for two years and nine months, and would probably have sat two years longer if the Viterbese had not stripped the palace of its roof, and left the electors at the mercy of the wind and weather. In the end a committee of six Cardinals was appointed to nominate a Pope, the rest agreeing to abide by their selection; and on the 1st of September, 1271, the choice of the six grand electors fell on Theobald Visconti, Archdeacon of Liège, a man outside the college; and to him the Church owes the rules and regulations by which conclaves have since been governed. Clement V., in 1304, was elected by compromise, and Adrian VI. was put into the chair not because any one particularly wished to see him there—for the Cardinals, it is said, were well-nigh dead with fear when they found they had made a Dutchman Pope—but because they could not agree as to which of themselves ought to be Pope. "My Lords," said Cardinal de' Medici, rising to put an end to a quarrel which seemed fatal to the interests of his house, "I see that none of us who are here met can be Pope. I have proposed three or four to you, and you have rejected them; I, on the other hand, cannot accept of the person proposed by you. We must look about for some one who is not present here. Take the Cardinal of Tortosa, a worthy man, advanced in life, and held in universal repute for sanctity." Hardly any one in the College knew this Cardinal of Tortosa; but they were all probably caught by the assurance that he was well advanced in life—always an interesting point with the College.

Adrian of Utrecht thus became Pope Adrian VI. And this consideration of age is said to have been the principal

reason weighing with the College when Sixtus V. was made Pope. He, like Adrian, was well advanced in years, and his tottering gait, his crutch, his hollow cough, his feeble voice, and his weird eyes apparently gave all the assurance ambitious Cardinals could desire to have, that Cardinal Montalto, if elected, would not long stand in their way. But the instant Montalto found himself head of the College, he dashed away his crutch, drew himself up to his full height, and thundered out a *Te Deum* which made the Cardinals tremble at the miracle they had wrought by their votes. "While I was Cardinal," said the Pope, offering his cheek to Cardinal de' Medici for the first kiss, "my eyes were fixed upon earth, that I might find the keys of Heaven. Now I have found them, I look to Heaven, for I have nothing more to seek on earth." His crutch, his cough, and his ghastly look had all been assumed to throw the College off its guard in placing the triple crown upon his brows; but Sixtus V. vindicated his election by his vigorous and successful administration of the affairs of the Church. There is a tradition that John XXII. owed his seat in the papal chair to his wit in turning the divisions of the college to his own account. He proposed that the Cardinals should leave the nomination in his hands as a perfectly impartial person; and when this was done he nominated himself with all the impartiality that a man could be expected to exercise under the circumstances. The college at once put a check upon this sort of impartiality for the future; but Pius IV. nearly lost his election by a similar manoeuvre on the part of the conclavist in attendance on Cardinal Cueva. This man secretly canvassed most of the Cardinals the night before the election, and asked them, as a personal compliment to his master, to give him one vote. There was not the slightest chance, the conclavist said, of Cardinal Cueva's return; but one vote in his favour would be a gratifying distinc-

tion for him to recollect, and one vote taken from Pius would not be missed. In this way, Torres, by his address, secured for his master the promise of thirty-two votes out of the thirty-four in conclave, and the trick would have been successful if one of the Cardinals had not happened to ask his neighbour for whom he was voting, and thus discovered that, like himself, he was about to pay a compliment to Cardinal Cueva, at Torres's suggestion. Cardinal Capo di Ferro at once rose and exposed the trick that had been played upon the conclave; and when the votes came to be counted, it was discovered that seventeen had already been given for Cueva, and that in a few minutes more he would have been Pope to his own surprise, as well as to that of the college.

These are a few of the tricks that have been tried to secure the return of a Pope. Perhaps quite as many have been tried to keep men out of the Papacy. But most of these tricks turn upon the use of the veto, and the veto has hardly ever been used against a favourite candidate except to be defeated by some subtle device. In 1829 the names of three Cardinals came out of the urn—Capellari with twelve votes, Gregory with twenty, and Castiglione with thirty-five; and these numbers seemed to be so decisively in favour of Castiglione, that a vote by access was taken at once to complete the work of the conclave. But two of the opposing Cardinals, wishing to defeat Castiglione, dropped votes into the second ballot with mottoes that did not correspond with those on their original votes, and thus vitiated the ballot for the day. But it was only for the day; for Castiglione was returned the next morning by a majority that placed the legality of his election beyond doubt. Urban VIII. was kept in suspense for twenty-four hours by a similar device of the enemy. He polled a majority of the college, and was about to be declared Pope when the scrutators discovered that one of the votes was missing, and it is necessary to the validity of an

election that all the electors in the college shall lodge their votes. One of the Cardinals had slipped the vote up his sleeve! But in this case, as in the case of Pius VIII., the ballot was taken afresh, and the legality of the return placed above suspicion or criticism.

It is said in Rome that there are three roads to the Vatican, that of the Coronari, or Rosary-makers, that of the Silversmiths, and the Long Street; and of course when laymen attain the highest dignity of the papacy, they attain it, as Adrian V. did, because the Cardinals cannot agree upon one of themselves. The Pope has now for many generations been taken from the ranks of the Cardinalate; but canonically there is no restriction of this kind upon the choice of the electors. It is a restriction that rests upon nothing more than custom, for under the canon law, a layman is as eligible as a priest to sit in St. Peter's chair, and two laymen at least have sat in that chair—John XIX. and Adrian V. The case of Adrian V. is a sort of test case, proving that the mere act of election invests a Pope with all the virtues and authority needed for the exercise of the prerogatives of the papacy. He reigned only twenty-nine days, and he died before he had taken orders; but in those twenty-nine days he promulgated decrees, revising the whole system of papal elections, and those decrees were for two or three generations the law of the Church. Urban VI. is the last priest below the rank of a Cardinal who has sat in the papal chair, and he at the time of his election was Archbishop of Bori. But in the conclave which sat in 1758, several votes were put into the chalice in favour of the ex-General of the Capuchins, Barberini, although at the time he was not in the sacred college, and the rule of the Church is understood to be that any one not under canonical impediment, and whether in orders or not, a Cardinal or a sub-deacon, is eligible for the chair of St. Peter. There have been several widowed Popes, at least one

Pope with a wife, Popes with sons, Popes with daughters, Popes with mistresses, Popes with illegitimate children, Popes of illegitimate birth themselves. In one instance a father and son have sat in the papal chair in succession, and the father has since been placed in the Kalendar as St. Hormisdas. His son was Pope Silverius. But that, I believe, is the only instance of the kind on record, although three or four of the Popes have had sons in the ranks of the Cardinalate, and Messrs. Crowe and Cavalcaselle, in their recently published *Life of Titian*, notice a curious spectacle in Venice, where, in the time of the Borgias, the son of a Pope, married to a Princess of Navarre, acted as legate *a latere* to his father, and, after high mass, in the robes of a Cardinal offered plenary indulgence to the Venetian people to join in a crusade against the Turks.

It would be throwing away a sentence to speculate on the prospects of this or that Cardinal occupying the chair of St. Peter when the fisherman's ring has been taken from the finger of Pío Nono, and broken in pursuance of the custom which has prevailed from remote antiquity; but it may be worth while to add that it is in the power of the Pope, with the concurrence of the Cardinals, to alter the mode of election in any way that may be deemed necessary in the interests of the Church, to shorten the usual nine days' notice, or to transfer the conclave from Rome to Malta, Avignon, or Paris. There is nothing sacred in the rules and regulations of Gregory, except so far as they are convenient and suited to the circumstances of the Church and of the time. They have been modified and altered time after time, and may of course be modified and altered again. Gregory IX., by a stroke of his pen, suspended every existing regulation on the subject of papal elections, set the Cardinals free from the observance of any obligations they might have sworn to in accordance with prescription, and specially empowered them not merely to meet for election on his decease, whenever it

might seem convenient, but to nominate by simple majority. This memorable exercise of papal authority, constituting a true *coup d'état*, stands justified, as Mr. Cartwright says in his interesting work on *Papal Conclaves*, by the approving voice of all ecclesiastical authorities, who have accepted it without one observation conveying an insinuation of usurpation against the Pope for doing what he did on this occasion. He dealt with a special emergency, as the Council of Constance did, by the application of measures drawn from the inspiration of the moment, and fashioned without slavish deference for precedent, and in both cases the result proved the wisdom of such bold action. A more recent and far more pointed precedent for an instrument such as Pius IX. has been supposed to have secretly made, is furnished in certain provisions taken by Pius VI. to secure the free election of a successor when he found himself exposed to personal violence at the hands of the French Republicans; and Mr. Cartwright adds, on the authority of one who was admitted to Gregory XVI.'s especial confidence, that His Holiness left behind him a document, under his own hand, empowering the Cardinals to proceed to an immediate election on his demise if they saw danger to the free action of conclave in observance of the traditional formalities.

Of course what has been done may be done again, and probably will be done; but the contest will arise this time, if it arises at all, between the civil and the ecclesiastical power, and that contest will turn upon the right of the Imperial Powers to a veto upon the choice of a Pope, if the Pope is to be recognised by the Roman Catholic Powers. This veto is supposed to represent, and does, I believe, represent, the ancient right of the Roman Emperors at Constantinople to be consulted in the election of the Patriarch of the Tiber, because the Pope in primitive times was elected partly by the people and partly by the priesthood of Rome, and till the time of



Charlemagne his appointment was not complete till it had been confirmed by the Imperial Power on the Bosphorus. When Charles received from the people of Rome, through the hands of the Patriarch, the crown of the world, he received it in the sandals and chlamys of a Roman noble, and received with it all the rights of the ancient emperors; and this right of veto upon the nomination of the Pope was one of them. The popular mode of election continued till the time of Hildebrand, and the existing constitution of the papacy is his work. It was at his suggestion that the College of Cardinals was erected into an ecclesiastical senate, and that all the electoral rights of the people and priesthood were transferred into their hands. But even Hildebrand had not the audacity to override the rights of the sovereign who had deposed three Popes, placed St. Peter's ring on his own finger, filled the Papal throne time after time with his own nominees, and compelled Roman deputies to appear at his court, just like ambassadors from other bishoprics, in order to have a successor named to them by imperial authority; and accordingly the Bull decreeing that the election of Popes should in future be held to appertain to the Cardinal Bishops who officiate for the Metropolitan and to the Cardinal clerks, "and that the remainder of the clergy and people tender but their acquiescence in the election," contains a proviso "saving the honour and reverence due to our beloved son Henry, at present king, and who, with God's favour, it is to be hoped will become emperor, as likewise to his successors, who may have personally acquired this right from the Apostolical See." This is the historical foundation of the Veto, or at

least the only foundation that I have been able to trace in the published works upon the conclave; and on the principle upon which Henry III. exercised his veto, the Kaiser of to-day will, I presume, claim to exercise a veto too, or to interdict communion between the prelates of Germany and the Bishop of Rome. Of course, if the Kaiser is allowed a veto, the King of Italy will claim one too, as a Roman Imperium once more resident in Rome, and if that claim is allowed, the independence and freedom of the Cardinals will be as much a figure of speech as the independence of the Pope or of the Porte.

The papacy seeing this, is, it is said, preparing in the coming conclave to ignore the vetos all round, and to appeal to the Catholic powers to defend the See of St. Peter if Germany or Italy challenges the election of the Pope. Prince Bismark, in a circular note sent out in the spring of 1872, pointed out to the Powers of Europe, that since the Pope claims to be the infallible head of the Church, it is necessary for the states which recognise the Pope to examine for themselves into his person and his election, and in order to do this the Prince contends that the chief Powers of Europe should be invested with some control over the legitimacy of the election, to the extent of deciding whether the elected Pope should be admitted to exercise even his purely ecclesiastical rights. That question was raised again in 1875, and it is likely to be raised once more, and to be raised in a very distinct and perplexing form, when Pio Nono has "run his course and sleeps in blessings."

CHARLES FEBODY.

May 23, 1877.